New Statesman

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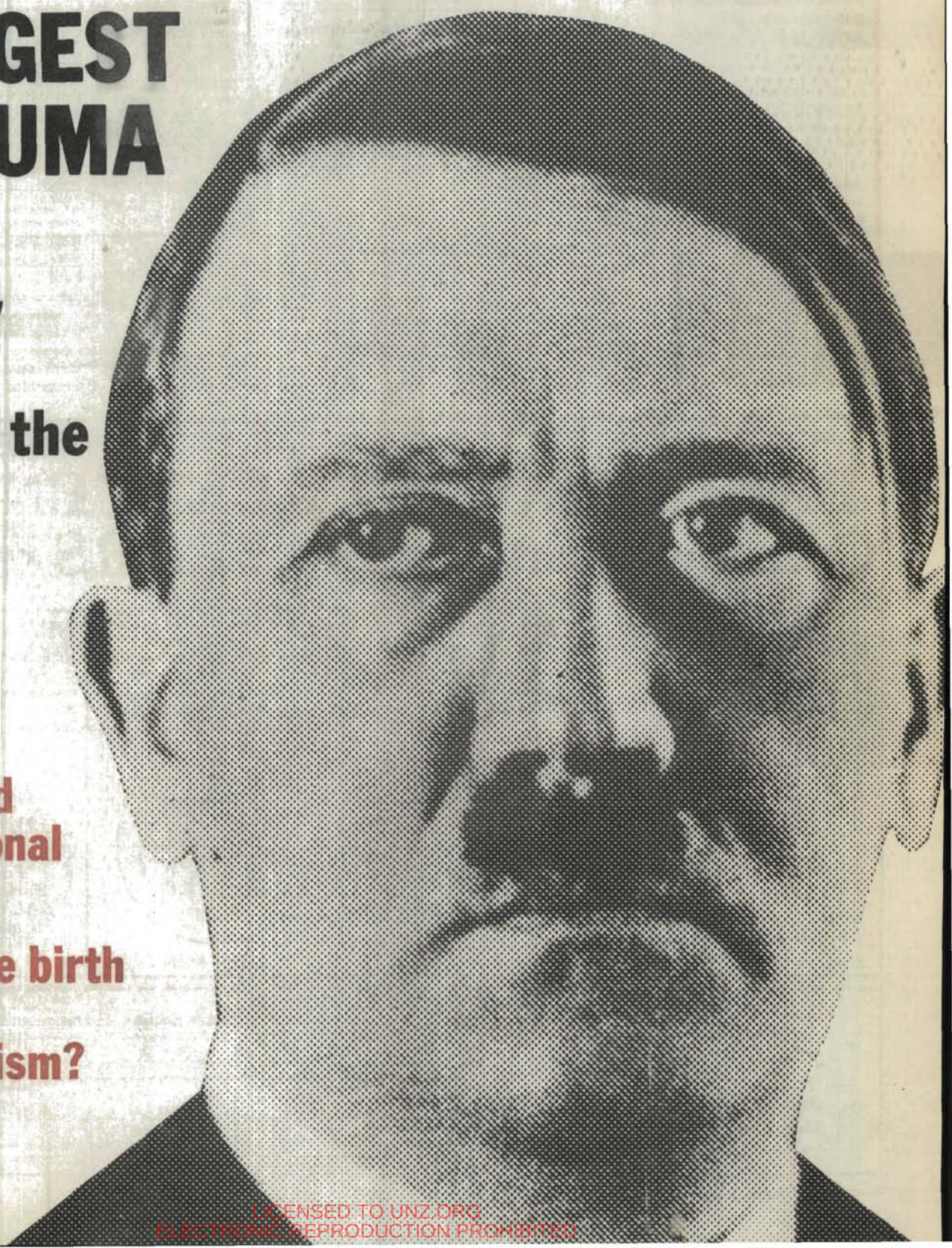
Gitta Sereny on the grip of the Hitler legacy



PLUS:

NCCL and the National Front

1917: the birth of real Communism?

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New Statesman

New Statesman
14-16 Farringdon Lane
London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001
Editorial: 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London EC1
©1984 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd

Subscriptions: Lesley Bridgmount, Cecilia Milton
Circulation: Liz Cooper, Tim Freeman
Display advertisements: Michael Roberts 01-253 2001
Classified advertisements: Laura Berryman, David Jones 01-251 5487

Subscription Rates
Surface mail:
UK £32, Overseas £36

Air mail:
Europe £36, Middle East £41, Africa, India, South America £45, Australasia, Far East £49, USA $79, Canada $92

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New Statesman Vol 107 No 2770 20 April 1984

NCCL and the National Front

THERE CAN be no one who cares deeply about human freedom and dignity who does not find the National Front and all it stands for loathsome. Although, like other fascist organisations, the National Front has declared itself to be against the power of 'big business', it exists to assert the supremacy of white, English manhood. It does so through investing the white male gene with a mystical power and cultivating violence against anything which threatens to undermine that power. Its enemies are first and foremost black people but also women, homosexuals, intellectuals, liberal culture in its broadest sense and every sort of freedom of thought. Its presence amongst some football crowds and in parts of the Conservative Party has contributed to the growth of mindless intolerance in both these social groups.

There would seem then to be no doubt that the National Front should be spurned by every person and group which is committed to freedom of thought, of expression, of movement for every member of society. Where it operates, the National Front has deprived black people of the basic right to live without fear of attack. Neither the actions of the police nor the power of the law have offered black people protection against racist violence and intimidation. In police ideology, 'law and order' is not seriously jeopardised by racist harassment. Although incitement to racial violence is illegal, prosecutions can only be brought after they have been referred to the Attorney General, ensuring the law cannot be invoked by ordinary people. The Public Order Act, introduced in 1936 to prohibit racist demonstration, has been used almost entirely against the Left.

The National Front does not, however, see the State as being on its side. Earlier this year, it decided to hold a counter-demonstration in Sheffield against the one being organised by a small left-wing group to commemorate 'Bloody Sunday', when 13 Irish citizens were killed by the British army in Derry. Hostility to the IRA was high after the Harrods bomb killings and the demonstrations in Sheffield were banned under the Public Order Act. The National Front decided to demonstrate the following week, on 29 January, in Wakefield. Their coaches converged at a motorway exit near Wakefield and drove to the outskirts of the town. There they were stopped by police and told to wait in a lay-by. After several hours it became clear that they would not be allowed to march and the convoy of coaches drove back south down the motorway.

It was this action by the police which prompted the request by the NF's Joe Pearce, for NCCL advice. A month later, on 28 February, Pearce had his home raided by the Obscene Publications Squad who took away his diary, address book and personal photos. This came to light when *Guardian* leader writer, John Torode, asked a legal officer of the NCCL, Barbara Cohen, to explain 'off the record' why the NCCL did not take up the case of 'miners wanting to work', and suggested the NCCL was merely a left-wing pressure group. Cohen explained that the organisation gave advice on civil liberties to anyone who asked for it, including the National Front. Advice had first been given last summer when a National Front supporter had died of a heart attack after being hit by a missile as he was leaving an election meeting. The NCCL informed Pearce of where the police might have acted outside the law and advised the organisation to consult its own solicitors.

At its annual conference last weekend, the National Council for Civil Liberties had to decide whether this course of action should be followed in future. The NCCL came into existence 50 years ago to protect Jewish people and others from the intimidating marches of Mosley's 'Blackshirts'; it is clearly a matter of principle that it should be trusted to campaign for the right of black people to live without fear of racist intimidation. The loss of black support for the NCCL would have ripples beyond the realm of the NCCL because it is one of the few political 'spaces' in which black people can operate. In the long term, civil liberties will only be strengthened by oppressed groups exercising a far more powerful political role.

This raises the crux of the issue: the defence of universal civil liberties for all to be protected under law, versus the role of politics in defining and changing who exercises power in society. These two imperatives may be incompatible, with no wholly right answer on whether or not organisations which oppose civil liberties should be advised on how to exercise their rights. The NCCL eventually passed four resolutions in which members attempted to draw a distinction between individuals — who will be advised on their rights without first being interrogated on their beliefs — and organisations. The conference decided it would 'be inappropriate to provide aid for any kind of organisation or individuals whose publicly stated objectives are the removal of civil liberties for a large section of society'.

There is a particular poignancy to this politically symbolic decision at the moment because all those concerned with civil liberties agree on the need to get more support for civil liberties campaigns.

That civil liberties throughout society are under threat is, in the longer term, more dangerous for black people than the existence of racist organisations. The Conservative government is curtailing the liberties of all with the Police Bill, its underhand plans to prevent the women at Greenham Common from protesting, its proposals to abolish self-government in London, and its many restrictions on the rights of trade unionists to take collective action. If democracy is to be protected, let alone extended, these issues must not be seen as only the concern of the committed Left. The fact that they often are is in the large part due to the fracture between the committed Left and the 'middle ground'. In the 'moral panic' which has blown up recently, too many people have been stampeded into the belief that the rights to protest and take industrial action can safely be restricted without any overall threat to democracy.

The dilemma forced on the NCCL is a product of the failure of political movements and parties to galvanise mass defence of these liberties. The National Front does not create the conditions which make black people so vulnerable to persecution; it only exploits them. A vigorous anti-racist movement, in which the critics of the NCCL participate, is the best defence against racism, just as a vigorous women's movement is a better defence against the countless daily attacks of sexual intimidation and violence than laws prohibiting the expression of sexist views. On the balance of argument, the NCCL should not have decided to withhold advice from 'an organisation whose publicly stated objectives are the removal of civil liberties from a large section of society' because the NCCL should not and cannot be the arbiter of who may exercise political rights. □

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Pension funds can't bat for Britain, rules judge

WELL AWAY from the coalfields, the miner's union has lost the first round in its other fight with the coal board — the fight over the investment of £3 billion in the mineworkers' pension fund.

The High Court has ruled that Arthur Scargill, the union's president, and the other four National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) trustees are failing in their duty by refusing to approve the 1982 pension fund's investment plan.

The union wants its members' pension fund to be invested in Britain and wants disinvestment in industries that compete with coal, such as gas and oil. But Sir Robert Megarry, the Vice Chancellor, rejected the argument that such policies are in the interests of miners. He declared that pension funds trustees have to put aside their personal views and could not make 'moral gestures'.

Unless the ruling is reversed on appeal, the judgment represents a major setback to the TUC's campaign to encourage unions to bring pressure to bear on the investment of their pension funds.

The NUM is unusual in having the same number of fund trustees as the employers, the NCB — union trustees are normally just outvoted — but the High Court judgment now makes irrelevant the number of union trustees.

Sir Robert's ruling that trustees have a duty to obtain expert advice and to act on it prudently means that decisions on where some £90 billion in pension funds is invested are now in the hands of investment fund managers and institutional advisers.

Pension fund trustees will find it difficult to exert any influence on investment in companies, such as Brooke Bond, known for paying low wages, or on investment in countries such as South Africa.

It is also a setback for the Labour-controlled councils considering the strategy of not investing their pension funds in companies that are involved in tendering for privatisation. Richard Minns, pensions adviser to the Greater London Council, fears that the court case has weakened the powers of trustees. 'If all pension funds acted in concert, they could have a powerful impact on the economy. On privatisation alone, if the pension funds refused to have any part of the flotation of British Telecom, it could cause the collapse of the sale'.

David Fowler

Arthur Scargill: what's a 'moral gesture'?

The judgment appears to have put paid to attempts to channel investment in directions that do not meet with the financial instincts of the City. The NUM trustees meet later this month to consider their response and the possibility of appealing against the verdict. If they continue to oppose the NCB's investment plans for the pension funds, they can be removed from the board of trustees by the High Court.

Geraldine Hackett

Customs in gay book backlash

TWO PROMINENT gay and lesbian organisations in London were raided on the same day last week by different arms of the law.

Gay's The Word (GTW), a gay community bookshop in King's Cross, was the subject of the attentions of the Customs and Excise who took 800 books away in the course of a four-and-a-half hour raid. Meanwhile police went to the office of Gay Rights in Prison (GRIP) in Whitechapel looking for 'photographs of an indecent nature involving young children'.

GTW bookshop manager Amanda Russell said Customs never made it clear what they were looking for. 'They really didn't have any idea of what our stock is. One of them even said, when I challenged a book he was taking away: "I don't know how to judge these things." '

All the titles taken away were imports as Customs has no jurisdiction over books published in the UK and included titles widely available in other bookshops — *Southern Discomfort* by Rita Mae Brown, *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* and *Tales of the City* by Armistead Maupin. Other books fell into the category described by Ms Russell as 'Mills and Boon for gay men'. A lot of the shop's paperwork and records were taken away.

GTW has been going for five years and is a serious gay community bookshop which doesn't stock porn. It is the first raid on the shop, although it has previously had stock impounded by Customs at the port of entry.

The homes of two of GTW's directors and of Amanda Russell were also searched — one for six hours. Ms Russell had books and video recordings of Cruft's Dog Show and *Dallas* taken away.

The books, which represent a substantial proportion of GTW's stock, have now been 'detained' by Customs and Excise who will either bring proceedings against the material or against people connected with the bookshop by initiating charges under the Obscene Publications Act.

Chris Bankford of GRIP told the *New Statesman* that the police raid resulted in a few of his old clothes being taken away and his brief arrest but no charges have been laid.

There is concern among the gay community that other raids will follow. In March, 50 police swamped a pub, The Bell in King's Cross, during a male gay disco, allegedly to check that the licensing laws were being observed. They arrested one man for drunkenness.

This concern has led to the formation of a GTW defence campaign following a 150-strong protest meeting on Sunday at London's County Hall. A demonstration at Customs and Excise Headquarters at Woburn Place in central London is planned for lunchtime on 27 April.

Christian Wolmar

The campaign can be contacted c/o Capital Gay, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1 or on 01-278 7654.

Roach inquiry — police verdict

AN INTERNAL police inquiry into the investigation of the death of Colin Roach has criticised police handling of the incident — but no action is to be taken against the officers involved.

Now the Roach Family Support Committee in Hackney, East London, is pressing through the European Parliament for an independent public inquiry. They have also began a 'break links' campaign, using all community organisations in the area to boycott the police until a full investigation has been held.

The police inquiry led by Greater Manchester Assistant Chief Constable J.S. Evans came in response to a letter to the Home Secretary from the inquest jury. They returned an eight-to-two majority verdict of suicide on Roach, who died of a gunshot wound in Stoke Newington police station in January 1983. But jurors were critical of the police handling of the investigation and treatment of the Roach family.

No disciplinary proceedings are to be taken against police officers, even though criticisms were made by the inquiry. A letter to the jurors says: 'Mr Evans's report has shown deficiencies in the manner in which the investigation into Colin Roach's death was administered which, while not affecting the outcome of the investigation, clearly did little to assist the credibility of the police witnesses at the inquest.'

Former Chief Inspector Stephen Clapton was singled out for criticism and has been moved from Hackney to traffic branch at New Scotland Yard.

However, all the other 13 points of criticism raised by the jurors were either dismissed or the police motivation was judged to be proper

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even if their judgment was open to question.

The inquiry accepted the police version of the treatment of the Roach family, even though the Roach family would not give evidence and one of the jury's complaints was that police did not keep records of events that night.

Similarly the police were not criticised for releasing to the press on a 'not for publication' basis a story that the dead man had a history of mental illness within an hour of the death and before either the investigation had begun or the body had been identified.

On the mystery of how the sawn-off shotgun came to be in the police station, the letter to jurors contradicts evidence given by the senior detective at the inquest.

Rosalind Bayley

● *This week, the Friends of Blair Peach Committee is holding a week of events to mark the fifth anniversary of the death of the school teacher who was killed by police, according to eye-witnesses, on a demonstration in Southall. Members of the campaign are still working to get the case to the civil courts as no action has ever been taken against the police officers.*

Dirty strike in Scottish cells

PRISONERS have gone on 'dirty' protest against conditions in Peterhead prison in Scotland. They are refusing to 'slop out' and are smearing themselves and their cells with excrement.

The prisoners say that following a rooftop protest on 9 January they were put in D Hall of the prison without heating and with only a blanket each in temperatures below 50°F. Some of them were held in a hastily constructed 'punishment block' in the nearly-destroyed A Hall, which was the centre of the January protest, they say. The Scottish Home and Health Department has admitted that prisoners are being held in 'temporary cells' but denied that it constitutes a punishment block. An estimated 30 prisoners are being held in the punishment block proper where the dirty protest began.

First news of the protest emerged in the Scottish press on 5 March. The Scottish Home and Health Department, which has responsibility for prisons in Scotland, has admitted that the protest is taking place but has described prisoners' accounts of it as 'exaggerated'. Meanwhile, protests have spread to other prisons in Scotland.

Immediately after an earlier protest at Peterhead, in October 1983, three prisoners were transferred to the notorious 'cages' at Porterfield prison, Inverness. Following the latest rooftop protest at Peterhead, one of these three prisoners, John O'Boyd Steele, appeared in Peterhead Sherriff's Court covered in boot polish to draw attention to the dirty protest at Peterhead. An ex-Peterhead prisoner is presently on a 'blanket' protest at Saughton prison.

According to Gateway Exchange, an Edinburgh-based agency set up by Jimmy and Sarah Boyle, at least 5 Peterhead prisoners are still on dirty protest. Eight prisoners have been charged with offences following the January protest. The charges include use of offensive weapons. Yet at the time of the protest, Scottish Home Affairs Minister Michael Ancram publicly stated that no weapons had been used. Prisoners say that they are being framed and that they will appear in court on dirty protest to draw attention to conditions at Peterhead.

Dirty protests are now so common in Scottish prisons that special drains have been installed in the Porterfield 'cages'. And last year an agreement was reached to pay prison officers a special 'dirty campaign allowance' of 50p per hour.

Jimmy Boyle, of Gateway Exchange, reports that there have been serious assaults against prison officers in the solitary units at Peterhead, as a result of the conditions that the prisoners are being held in. Gateway Exchange is calling for an independent public inquiry into conditions at Peterhead. This call has also been supported by local Conservative MP Albert McQuarrie who has questioned official accounts of conditions in the prison and called for a 'full and open inquiry'.

Terry O'Halloran

MISCELLANY

Bottomless pits

The bill for policing the miners' dispute is reaching Falklands-like proportions. One of the smaller forces, the North Wales constabulary, is plunging deeply into the red. Last Friday the North Wales police authority was told that £350,000 a week was clocking up. And there are only two pits in the area — one shut tight, the other picketed by South Wales miners. Police from Surrey and Hampshire have been identified enjoying the bracing sea breezes that blow around Wales's only scab colliery, the Point of Ayr, a couple of miles along the coast from the resort of Prestatyn where they

have been accomodated in a holiday camp. That might be good news for recession-hit tourism. It is bad news for the ratepayers of Gwynedd and Clwyd, who have to pay for them under the 'mutual assistance' scheme. They are used to paying £240,000 a week for their police force — the £350,000 a week for policing the miners' dispute is on top of that.

Coming to scoff

In the latest issue of the free marketeers' journal, *Economic Affairs*, Digby C. Anderson attacks the 'statist ambitions' of dieticians. He doesn't disagree with the need for people to eat less salt, fat and sugar, but thinks that people can make up their own minds. After all, there is plenty of information in the market, he says. 'Interventionists', he adds, are just upset because people 'wilfully choose to *ignore* advice and eat what they *like*'. A full-page advertisement facing the article conveys 'best wishes from Ranks Hovis McDougall, the makers of . . .' The list includes Mr Kipling Cakes (mostly sugar), Cerebos and Saxa (most of the salt market), Atora (shredded beef suet), Bisto (mostly salt), McDougalls (mostly white, fibreless, flour) and Mothers Pride (the mostly fibreless bread made out of it).

Nicholas Riddle

When is a bus service cut not a cut? When it's a change, according to transport minister Nicholas Ridley. Ridley told the *Standard* last week: 'Cuts is the wrong word. There may be some changes. There are some areas where buses are hardly used at all, where everybody seems to have cars and it seems absurd to continue services of that kind.' Ridley also tried some ritual GLC-bashing, something not alien to the pages of the *Standard*: 'The vast problems of transport in London should be handled by professional people under close political direction. What the GLC has tried to do is to apply political solutions.' But what's the difference between 'close political direction' and 'applying political solutions'? The article was published under the headline 'Yes, the fares will have to go up.' A Department of Transport spokesperson thought it was misleading, but added: 'What can you expect? The *Standard* is anti-government.' It is *now*.

Inter alia

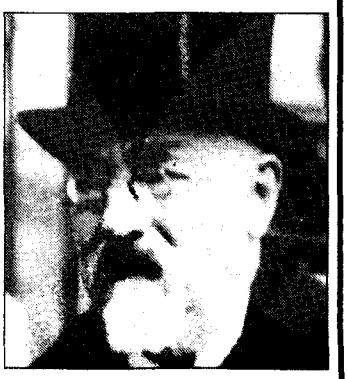
Home Secretary Leon Brittan has opened the floodgates to people claiming embarrassing comparison with Zola Budd, granted citizenship after 10 days. One long-standing thorn in the government's flesh is South African Jonathan Bloch, who has lived in Britain for eight years. He was granted refugee status in 1978, which usually becomes 'permanent residence' after four years. This was refused last December. Brittan, or at least a civil servant called Elaine O'Dell, explained why thus: 'Mr Bloch is co-author of a book entitled *British Intelligence and Covert Action* which, *inter alia*, names individuals working for British Intelligence authorities. Such an action is in the view of the Secretary of State bound to place servants of the Crown at greater risk of harm, whether or not the allegations are well-founded, than had the book not been published.' In other words, Mr Bloch hasn't broken the law, but he has written a book which Mr Brittan dislikes intensely, and anyway he can't run very fast.

Mental Bloch

Sadly, Leon Brittan's are not the only double standards in the Bloch case. A list of left-wing Labour MPs as long as your arm flocked to sign a motion urging the home secretary to reconsider. Would they be so keen if they knew that Bloch is currently crossing the picket line every day at Latin American Newsletters, where he works? The NUJ and the NGA are on strike there, but not SOGAT, the print union of which Bloch is a member and former father of chapel (shop steward). Perhaps that should endear him to the government.

On the chin

After all the fuss, it turned out to be an inside job. We asked readers to identify the last bearded cabinet minister, although of course we knew all the time it was Lord Passfield. It's just that we though some of you might not have known that Sidney Webb, founder of the *NS*, husband of Beatrice, etc., had 'much against his inclination' been elevated to the peerage and served as dominions and colonial secretary in the second Labour government. That's 1929 to 1931, for the few stragglers. Huge prizes for the fastest off the mark are 'in the post'.



Lord Passfield aka Sidney Webb

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Creche victory for skill centre

THE FIRST nursery at a Manpower Services Commission skillcentre will open in south London later this year.

The nursey is a victory against a junior minister at the Department of Employment, Peter Morrison. Eighteen months ago Morrison vetoed plans for the nursery, overruling regional officials from the MSC.

Three London boroughs had agreed to pay the cost of equipping and running a 16-place nursery at the MSC skillcentre in Deptford. Unemployment among unskilled workers is high in Deptford, and a nursery was seen as crucial to a new course in the skill centre — a 'women's taster course' — which allows women to try out a range of work, such as plumbing, welding, electronics, carpentry and joinery, before applying for a full training course. Lack of childcare is one of the reasons why at present less than four per cent of trainees in skillcentres are women.

But Morrison stopped plans going ahead last April. He argued that training had to be like work — As employers were not likely to provide childcare, than training centres shouldn't either.

In a letter to councillors in the three boroughs — Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark — he wrote: 'Our concern is to provide training appropriate to help fit people better for working life'. I do not think we are contributing to that as trainers if we were to provide them with facilities which they were unlikely to find available when they had jobs.'

The same dusty answer came from David Young, who chairs the MSC. He told John Silkin, Labour MP for Deptford, that money for training should not be diverted to other purposes 'such as creches'. 'The plain fact of life is that very few women come forward for such places', he added.

The course at Deptford went ahead in December without the nursery. One woman had to make arrangements for five children, all at different stages of schooling.

Questions were asked in the Commons, and Labour MPs pointed out that Morrison's own experience of childcare — a nanny, a governess, a nursery footman, before being boarded at Eton — was not available to most parents in Deptford.

A couple of weeks ago he gave way. The nursery can go ahead, as long as there is no cost to the MSC and the space allocated for the nursery is not needed for training. The boroughs will thus have to foot the bill of £6-7000.

Carole Snee, one of the campaigners, and a worker at the Greenwich Employment Resource Unit, said: 'With rate-capping, local authorities may not have the money to fund nurseries, but at least it opens the door to having childcare provision at skillcentres.'

Geraldine Hackett

Runaway bus routes approved

THE GOVERNMENT wants to relax the licensing of bus routes so that virtually anyone would be able to start a bus service. The result of this free-for-all would be widespread public bus service cuts.

The Department of Transport is consulting bus operators over its proposals. Once finalised they are to be included in the new transport Bill, which will be introduced this autumn. The new legislation is in response to a series of embarrassing setbacks for the government. The most serious embarrassment concerned a private firm, Yeowart's coaches. This firm applied for a licence to run a bus route in Whitehaven, in Cumbria.

The traffic commissioners, who regulate competition among bus operators in the public interest, refused Yeowart's application because it would undermine the finances of the local National Bus Company operator, and cause the withdrawal of bus services to outlying villages. These bus services are unprofitable, but were cross-subsidised from more profitable routes in the towns.

The traffic commissioners said no. The firm appealed and the Department of Transport's inspector said no. But David Howell, who was then Secretary of State for Transport, said yes. Howell was taken to court by local councils, and was defeated.

The most recent government embarrassment was over 'Shuttlebus', which wanted to run 25 minibuses from Heathrow to London. Transport secretary Nicholas Ridley overruled his own inspector who had turned it down. And Ridley is currently faced with the even bigger headache of having to overturn the decision of the inspector who ruled against Associated Minibus Operators' plan to run 400 minibuses in competition with London Transport.

Cross-subsidy is an extremely important source of finance for buses, especially in rural areas. One study in Taunton showed that the revenue from cross-subsidy was three times the subsidy from the county council. A large number of rural routes, and even those in suburbs, would be affected by the change.

Among the wilder proposals is that minibus drivers need not pass a bus driving test. But the Bus and Coach Council — the industry's trade association — has warned the government that this would compromise safety standards.

Mick Hamer

Big trial — bigger money

THE LARGEST terrorist trial in British or Irish legal history, involving 41 defendants, is due to begin in Belfast's Crown Court on 89 May when Derry-born IRA Supergrass Raymond Gilmour testifies against his alleged terrorist accomplices. The trial is likely to cost over £1.5 million in legal fees alone.

It is expected to take place under the same siege-like conditions as last August's Christopher Black Supergrass trial — the biggest trial to date. Then, over 90 policemen and prison warders crowded into Court No 1 of Belfast's Crumlin Road Courthouse. Two marksmen cradling MI carbines stood at either end of the courtroom as extra protection for Black and Mr Justice Kelly — who also wore a bullet-proof vest and was assigned six personal bodyguards. At the end of the 117-day trial, which carried £1.25 million in legal costs, Mr Justice Kelly doled out over 4,000 years of sentences to the 38 defendants.

Like Black, Raymond Gilmour has been granted immunity from prosecution. The 41 defendants, including three women, face a total of 190 terrorist charges ranging from murder, attempted murder, possession of firearms and explosives to aiding an illegal organisation. Initially it was believed that the mass trial should be broken down into three separate ones but Lord Chief Justice Lowry, head of Northern Ireland's Bench, accepted a prosecution argument that it should stay as one.

The sheer size of the Supergrass trials has already severely strained the North's judicial and administrative machinery. Remand periods for prisoners, awaiting trial have lengthened to 30 weeks on average and five prisoners have actually spent more than two years in jail before their trial.

But the court cases have also created a legal bonanza. Legal costs have soared as the length, complexity and number of defendants in terrorist trials before the no jury Diplock courts increased. The Black trial is reckoned to have cost £10,000 a day in counsel's and solicitor's fees. The overall figure for 1982 for civil and criminal legal aid in Northern Ireland, according to official sources, was £12.6 million, of which £2.7 million went in legal aid in criminal trials. This does not, of course, take into account the prosecution's costs.

No precise breakdown of barrister's fees has been given, though the Legal Aid authorities have issued internal guidelines which take into account the case's complexity, the seriousness of the charges, the number of defendants being represented and the duration of the trial before calculating the 'daily refresher fee'. It is reckoned to be up to £600 a day in a major terrorist trial where senior counsel are representing three or more of defendants.

This partly explains the reluctance of some barristers to become judges. As one legal source reportedly said after the attempted murder of Resident Magistrate Tom Travers by the IRA: 'Who in their right mind is going to give up £200,000 a year to get £40,000 as a judge and face that kind of threat?'

Kevin Toolis

Labour lead in London

LABOUR captured three seats from the Conservatives last week in council by-elections in the London borough of Haringey. Voting took place the day after the Commons debate on abolishing elections next year to the Greater London Council and the other metropolitan authorities. The overall swing to Labour in the three Haringey wards was 12 per cent.

These victories for Labour represent the party's best achievement in local by-elections for at least three years. They also underline a marked recovery in Labour's fortunes in London over the past two months. In most elections in the past three years, Labour has done worse in London than in the rest of Britain. That has now changed. Since mid-February, by-elections have been held in 15 London borough wards. Overall there has been a 10 per cent swing from Conservative to Labour, compared with the last full borough elections in 1982. These are the figures:

	Vote	*%*	*% change since '82*
Labour	15,645	36.0	+7.9
Conservative	14,128	32.5	—11.9
Lib/SDP	12,763	29.3	+4.0
Others	978	2.2	—

The Conservatives only held three of the nine seats they defended in London during this period. Apart from Haringey, they lost two seats to the Liberals (in Redbridge and Kingston) and one to an independent (in Merton). Labour gained a seat from the Alliance (in Lambeth) but lost two others (in Southwark and Tower Hamlets).

The Alliance's average has been boosted by its exceptional performances in the four seats it won: in the other 11 wards, its average vote fell by four per cent.

If the shift in votes were repeated in London-wide elections held now, Labour would retain control of the GLC — even fighting it on the new boundaries that came into force last year. The likely outcome would be: Labour 45 seats, Conservative 36, Alliance 3. The by-election figures, adjusted for a slight Conservative bias in the pattern of seats fought, suggest a 7 per cent Labour lead over the Conservatives in London. This tallies almost exactly with a MORI poll for the Association of London Authorities in late March, which found a six point Labour lead.

Peter Kellner

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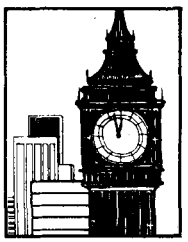

PETER KELLNER Political Editor

Where the Euro-gravy comes from — and where it should go

TWO OF THE most pressing problems for Labour's leading politicians and officials this Easter are: how to solve the party's financial crisis; and what to put in the manifesto for June's elections to the European Parliament. The way these things happen, you can bet a first edition of *Capital* to a torn photograph of Harold Wilson that the two issues are being handled quite separately. But they could be linked; and they should be.

I spent most of last week at the European Parliament in Strasbourg as a guest of the Socialist group. It paid my airfare and provided a daily allowance for sleeping, eating and travelling in Strasbourg. The point of this remark is not just to declare an interest, but to raise a wider issue. Whatever the merits of the European Parliament, frugality is not one of them. It is generous in its treatment of staff, and in its subventions to the different political groups represented at the parliament. It is even more generous in its treatment of members — the MEPs.

Obtaining detailed information about MEPs' allowances is not easy. Having eventually tracked down the official list, I can see why. The sums involved are scandalous.

The easy bit is the salary each MEP receives. This is paid by each national government at the same rate as its own domestic MPs. So British MEPs receive £16,106 a year, which is less than the French, Germans, Italians, Belgians and Dutch, but more than the Luxembourgeois, Danes, Irish and Greeks. So much is publicly known. It is the other allowances, tax-free and made direct by the European Parliament itself on a common Europe-wide rate, that all the coyness is about.

These are the figures. MEPs receive three main sets of allowances:

- An 'attendance' allowance of £72 for each day an MEP clocks in for a meeting of a committee in Brussels or a full plenary session at Strasbourg.
- A travel allowance of 44p per mile for the first 250 miles of each journey, and 22p per mile after that.
- Up to £27,400 a year for secretarial and office expenses.

In addition, MEPs can claim up to £1,450 a year for extra travel inside the EEC, other than to or from Brussels or Strasbourg.

Scope for MEPs benefitting — wholly within the rules — from these allowances is considerable. First, the attendance allowance is generous by any reasonable standard. It is higher than that for even the most senior staff of the Parliament, and more than double the rate paid by the Socialist Group to visitors like myself. I found no difficulty in surviving comfortably in Strasbourg on my allowance.

Moreover, it is not uncommon for British MEPs to make day-trips to Brussels or Strasbourg. They are still entitled to their allowance. Indeed, they do not even formally claim it: the cheque arrives by virtue of the fact that they signed in.

Karel van Miert, a Belgian Socialist MEP, lives five miles from Brussels. He recently asked to stop receiving attendance payments for taking part in committee meetings in Brussels. He was told he could not withdraw from the system in this way: if he tore up or returned his cheques, the Parliament's officials would simply pay his money direct into his bank account. Only after some months' argument did he win the right *not* to receive £72 a day for driving five miles into Brussels and back.

Equally, the travel payments are automatic, and need bear no relation to actual travelling costs. If a group of MEPs drive to Strasbourg in one car, or buy bucket-shop air tickets, they can keep the difference. One Danish MEP showed me his cheque for 5615.60 Danish crowns — almost £600 — for his round-trip journey from Copenhagen to Strasbourg last week. His actual fare, he proudly explained, was one-third this amount.

Two attempts have been made to change the system. One was by Van Miert, the Belgian. He tried to introduce a regulation to put MEPs roughly on the same footing as the Parliament's officials for travel, and just be reimbursed for money actually spent on travel. He only received the support of around a dozen MEPs.

The second attempt was made by Baroness Elles, a Conservative MEP. As a vice-president of the Parliament, she is one of the MEPs who oversee rules such as travel and attendance allowances. She, too, wanted to scrap the mileage-rate system in favour of reimbursement of actual expenses. According to one close observer, 'her suggestion was treated with shock'.

WHAT TO DO about it? The main objective must be to change the system of payments, with its built-in temptations. But until then, Labour MEPs could take a leaf out of the book of four Danish 'People's Movement' anti-marketeers who have sat as MEPs since 1979.

Part of the European election manifesto of the Movement, both in 1979 and this year, is that its MEPs receive no personal financial reward from being MEPs. This is what this year's manifesto says on the subject:

> None of the Movement's representatives may derive financial gain from membership of the European Parliament. Their salaries are fixed in agreement with the executive. Income in excess of this goes towards financing the Movement's information campaigns. Any secretarial assistance or campaign allowances are employed in the interests of the Movement after consultation with the elected representatives.

In practice, all secretarial and office expenses are paid over to the Movement, which provides one secretary in Copenhagen for the four MEPs, and one in Strasbourg. The Movement rents a flat in Brussels and another in Strasbourg for the four, and in addition allows them to keep about £25 a day for out-of-pocket expenses (the same rate as for a senior Danish civil servant on an international trip). The four MEPs sign over their entire travel allowances to the Movement, which pays a travel agent to supply MEPs with their tickets. Sven Skovmand, the MEP who showed me his cheque for last week's travel, made a profit of £400 not for himself, but for the Movement.

Altogether the four reckon to benefit the Movement to the tune of £200,000 a year. With this money, Denmark's anti-marketeers have been able to finance a modest but effective campaigning staff, provide a £30,000 annual subsidy for a well-designed 24-page weekly tabloid paper and commissioned a 482-page study of how Denmark could withdraw from the EEC and survive.

I see no reason why Labour should not behave roughly like Denmark's anti-marketeers in the organisation of its MEPs' allowances, and make a similar commitment in the party's election manifesto. If Labour wins 30 seats in June's European elections, and each of them provides the party with £50,000 a year, it would be worth £1.5 million annually to Labour — enough to transform the party's finances.

Even if some important differences are acknowledged — like the fact that British MEPs have Euro-constituencies to tend, whereas the Danes are elected on a national list — it should be easily possible for Labour's contingent after June to provide at least £500,000 a year among them to the party's national coffers.

It goes without saying that the dice are loaded against such an idea. In February Richard Caborn, the MEP for Sheffield, put a more modest set of proposals to Labour's International Committee. One of Caborn's suggestions was that Labour should change its relationship with the Socialist Group, in order to help the party more. Following various arguments about the virtues of the Group, Caborn's proposals were rejected.

Even if no action is taken nationally, it will still be open for the party at local level to ask their MEP to provide detailed accounts of where all their Euro-money comes from, and where it goes. We belong to a party that believes in accountability: let us turn the notion to the party's financial advantage. □

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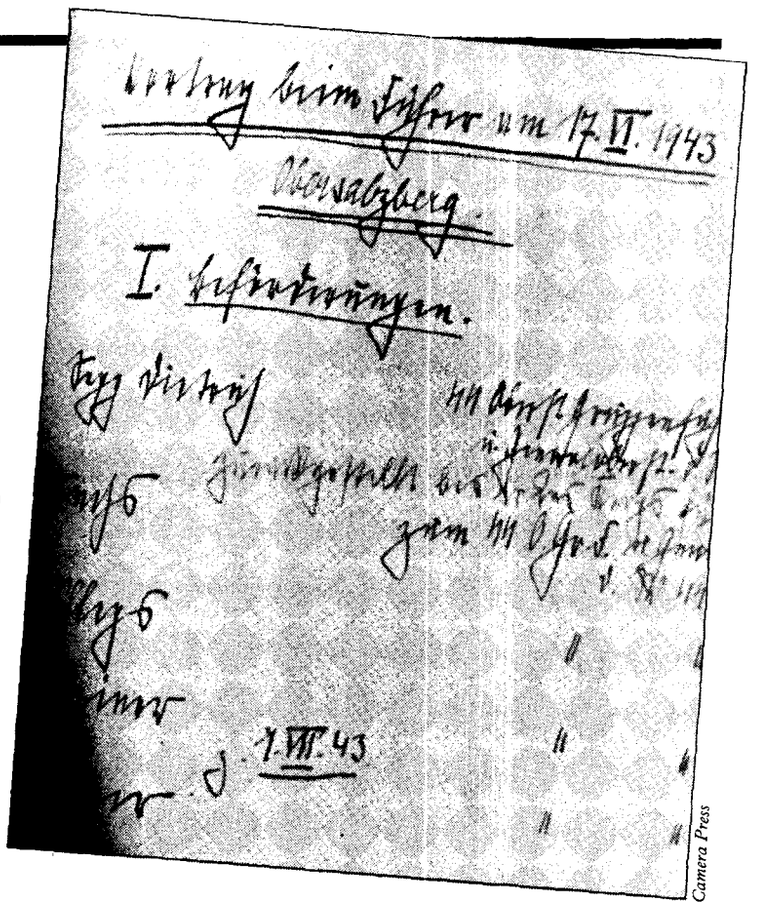
The longest trauma

Thirty-nine years ago this week a plane crashed in a small village in East Germany carrying archives from Hitler's office. A year ago this week, the world was informed that 60 diaries written by Hitler (and supposedly salvaged from the plane) (see right) were to be published in some of the West's richest newspapers, including the *Sunday Times* in Britain. Since the discovery that the diaries were forged, two men have been charged in West Germany and are awaiting trial. Gitta Sereny, expert writer on nazism and its aftermath, reports on how public opinion has responded to them and why it is still impossible to deal rationally with Hitler's legacy.



Camera Press

A YEAR AGO this week, the West German magazine *Stern* suddenly announced that they were about to publish newly discovered diaries by Hitler, their timing brought forward by three weeks because of a leak in another magazine. One day later, *The Times* announced that Rupert Murdoch had just concluded the purchase of the English language rights. Twenty-four hours later, the *Sunday Times* published additional background material — like the *Times*'s almost exclusively supplied by *Stern* — and a first sample of the 'Diaries'. By this time, *Stern* was busily selling syndication rights all over the Western world.

In the following two weeks, Hitler's name was never off the front page of the world's newspapers, getting him more publicity than he had received when he came to power 50 years earlier. Then the West German Minister of the Interior announced that three volumes of the 'Diaries' had at last been examined and tested by Federal experts and found to be fakes. Everybody except the publishers who had bid successfully for the rights and the band of surviving Nazi sympathisers, breathed a sigh of relief. For if one thing unites all the actors in this story — the publishers, 'experts', journalists, forgers and not least the public — it is the way in which normal and rational judgments are suspended when dealing with Hitler's legacy.

Since that hectic fortnight, two men have been imprisoned. Konrad Kujau, alias Fischer, who claims to have invented the diaries himself and who is charged with defrauding *Stern* of 1.1 million DM (about £295,000); and Gerd Heidemann, *Stern's* star reporter, who is charged with defrauding the magazine of 1.7 million DM. Both men were indicted last month, on 22 March, Heidemann also being charged with early knowledge that the 'Diaries' were forged.

Yet Heidemann has been released twice before for lack of evidence, and his lawyers are confident that he can prove he knew nothing of the forgery. Police have found no trace of the missing 7 million DM (about £1,865,000). In fact, police have unravelled little of the affair. Confronted by exceptionally unreliable witnesses, and operating on strictly limited funds, they were unable to extend their enquiries abroad, as was essential if they were to uncover the real dimensions of this case. My own seven months of research, carried out for the *Sunday Times* and published last December, point to a complex crime involving quite different people (most of whom are managing to lie low) as the organisers and intellectual sources of a massive fraud committed for political motives as well as for money, but in the end bungled by greed.

A fair trial of the two men who are taking the rap has anyway been put at risk by the shenanigans of much of the West German media. Kujau, who is virtually incapable of uttering a true word (I have checked his stories and they are a tissue of lies) has become a media star from prison. He claims that he is the sole author of all the 'Diary' volumes, that he has faked and sold hundreds of 'Hitler' paintings and is, in short the greatest forger in history.

Bild Zeitung, West Germany's largest circulation daily, ran his life story last autumn, paying him 100,000 DM (£27,000). He repeated his lies in *Der Spiegel* six weeks ago in a 13-page interview; two days later, he churned them out again, unchallenged, on TV, charming German Panorama's ace interviewer Stefan Aust. It is all ludicrous but the Germans are lapping it up. Heidemann has no such talent for gaining champions and is now despised by most of his peers, and, far from profiting from the forgeries, he is relying on unpaid lawyers.

This absurd circus can only be understood within the context of the whole Nazi trauma. It is curious that much of the world has never understood, never believed the extent of the trauma Hitler caused and left in Germany. Succeeding generations have properly condemned those Germans who refused to know what was happening. They have ignored the countless others who were torn apart by sorrow and guilt. Germany's terrible past is the theme of thousands of books and hundreds of films. Not a single German post-war writer, filmmaker or journalist of stature has failed to grapple with this theme. And today, with most of the population grown up or born after it was all over, numerous academics devote their lives to trying to understand this past so they can pass on that understanding to the new generations. Every day, in a way which is unimaginable in Britain, politicians make references to the Nazis and new facts about the horrors are printed and broadcast.

It is this atmosphere which gave birth to and made possible the 'Hitler diaries'.

NEWS OF the 'diary' was greeted almost universally with a scream of outrage and derision. It arose within hours of the first announcement, before the technical details — 62 books of cheap quality, many of them half empty, the content banal and familiar from published material — were known. Across the Western world, commentators rushed to declare that Hitler 'hated to write, couldn't have written because his hand was injured in the bomb attack of 24 July 1944, had never been seen writing a diary'. Ergo, the 'diaries' could not be, must not be, were not authentic. It was an extraordinary and almost entirely emotional reaction against a possibly knowable and 'human' Hitler.

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In fact, though the 'diaries' were fakes, my own researches produced one witness from Hitler's immediate circle who said those on duty at nights knew Hitler 'often wrote in his room until early morning. We walked on our toes past his door so as not to disturb his work.' The chief medical officer of the Bunker saw Hitler write — though not diaries! — until the end, his right hand functioning after the bomb attack and despite his Parkinson's disease.

Protests against the 'diaries' from those whose bids for the journalistic bonanza failed were predictable. But many journalists on Times Newspapers and on other papers which had purchased rights were also in an uproar. Their anger was directed against proprietors who, they said, were usurping editorial decisions and imposing them on their papers to make money.

I did not share this sense of outrage. First, I saw their protest too as an emotional one against letting Hitler speak, rather than against publishers' morality. But second, put this morality in a wider context. If the 'diaries' *had* been authentic, their monetary value would have been astronomical. Historians all over the world, especially in Germany, would have ached to get their hands on them, but no academic institution there — where they truly belong — could have raised the money. Only rich newspapers with worldwide syndication rights could.

That being so, a panic of competition between the West's richest publishers whirled into force, whipped on by *Stern*'s deadlines, sweeping aside the more careful moral and historic analysis which non-profit making concerns would have demanded. Dozens of proprietors around the world bid for the 'diaries', convinced, like *Stern* and Murdoch, that this would bring in readers in droves. They were right. Despite the universal scepticism, all the papers which 'bought in' gained literally hundreds of thousands of new readers during those short 'Hitler diary' weeks.

The outrageous conditions imposed on the negotiations by *Stern* should certainly never have been accepted. But to the bidders, all fearful their competitors would beat them to the publishing coup of the century, it was inconceivable that *Stern* could have planned and prepared a publication of such magnitude for 2½ years without being absolutely certain of authenticity.

It is not true, as has since been suggested, that *Newsweek* dropped out of the running because they did doubt the diaries' authenticity. Indeed, they managed to carry off and publish free of charge a large chunk of text. Rather, having being shown a compilation of the remarks the alleged Hitler had written over the years about the Jews, they felt that these were too mild: that Hitler gave too few details and evinced no regret, and that this would be unacceptable to their readers. Here wishful thinking overrides historical truth, for the greatest care had been taken to ensure nothing on paper linked Hitler with knowledge of 'the final solution'. (Ironically, unknown to *Newsweek* or to *Stern*, Heidemann had kept back, for later publication, another 12 closely written pages in which the alleged Hitler described his precise and revolting plans for a 'natural solution' of the Jewish problem . . . of course, not murder!)

Before the announcement, no one at the Federal Archives had heard of, much less seen, any 'diaries'. What they had been given by *Stern* were some 'Hitler documents' and a few blank pages cut out of the Hess 'special volume'. They had authenticated these as being of pre-war origin. They were never told the pages or documents had anything to do with 'diaries'.

Doubts about the morality of publishing and the authenticity of the 'diaries' did remain to worry the publishers, and the *Sunday Times* did make some provision to protect itself. While *Stern* proposed to run the 'diaries' for 16 weeks, the extracts grouped round themes, the *Sunday Times* planned to publish much less material, in its proper chronological order, accompanied by critical commentaries. But first of all the 'diaries' had to be authenticated. There was a three week moratorium after the announcement in which to do this. Murdoch made an agreement with the seven *Sunday Times* journalists assigned to the projects that if they thought there was a 55 per cent chance they were forged (Murdoch's suggested figure) publication — in Britain at least — would be scrapped.

As a final irony, what convinced the *Sunday Times* negotiators was the very refusal of *Stern*

Gerd Heidemann, right, not letting go of a forged diary, while Rudolf Hess's son joins in the publicity.

Camera Press

The hoaxers

Gitta Sereny's conclusions on the diary hoax were published in the *Sunday Times* on 11 and 18 December 1983. In brief, she showed how Heidemann had been drawn unknowingly into an elaborate conspiracy which would both produce invaluable, mostly forged, Nazi documents and which would exonerate Hitler from the most serious charges against him. Heidemann was chosen as the dupe because of his obsession with the Nazis and because of his standing as a *Stern* reporter.

Among the factors that convinced Heidemann was the discovery that a plane carrying Hitler's archives did crash in the village of Bornersdorf near Dresden in April 1945. The site in East Germany enhanced the atmosphere of secrecy. Through Kujau, Heidemann was told that the diaries, as well as other documents, had come from the plane. Because the crash had indeed taken place — from which a number of Luftwaffe officers survived — the origin of the diaries and other documents seemed genuine.

Gitta Sereny identified a network of SS officers as the source of the plan to use Heidemann and Kujau to offer the Hitler documents to the world. Chief among them is Medard Klapper, who claims to have been an SS officer in Hitler's bodyguard. He is said to be a director of the HIAG, the 'mutual aid society' for ex-SS officers. It is he who claimed, and still claims, that he is in contact with Martin Bormann, and knows the whereabouts of the Goering treasures.

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to allow the *Sunday Times* to carry out its own scientific tests. I remember vividly my arrival late one April evening last year to join the *Sunday Times* team at the Hotel Four Seasons in Hamburg. They had been battling with Gruner and Jahr, the publishers of *Stern*, and the *Stern* editors for days over getting some of the volumes for tests in London. No guarantee of safety and discretion would satisfy *Stern*.

I suggested that this reluctance to hand over any volumes had to raise doubts. Brian MacArthur, head of the *Sunday Times* team, agreed. 'But when you see their absolute assurance', he said, 'their total calm in the face of this almost universal disbelief, then all one can think is that they know something they are not telling; that they have something up their sleeves, some sort of absolutely reliable confirmation of authenticity.'

OF ALL the men who played some part in the most shaming press debacle of our time, the one who has received the most obloquy is Gerd Heidemann. It is now extremely difficult to judge objectively a man whose obsessions one deplores. But one does not have to like him to find intolerable on principle the way he has been treated. Because he and his obsessions with Hitler and Nazism triggered the whole of this affair, it is almost impossible to make any sense of it without knowing something of his personality.

I first met him in January 1983 following up approaches made to the *Sunday Times* about Hitler diaries that he made in 1980 through *Sunday Times* correspondent Antony Terry. In December 1982 David Irving contacted the paper about '27 Hitler diaries'. I found Heidemann to have an extraordinary political and intellectual naivety; he had long been convinced diaries existed yet, despite his obvious fanatic determination to find them, he was prepared to admit doubts about their authenticity and apparently determined to have them examined, when found, by such historians as Eberhard Jackel and Martin Broszat. (Former colleagues at *Stern* later confirmed his persistent requests for authentication.)

He told me in great detail about his search, but not that *Stern* already had many of the books. He showed me his archive, which was impressive: he had the entire library of 100,000 negatives of photographs taken by Hitler's photographer, Hoffman. He had a letter from Karl Wolff, the highest ranking SS officer still alive, who doubtless holds important historical documents, appointing Heidemann as his literary heir and executor he had what looked like extraordinary documents which he said he had shown to experts (also later confirmed); and he had a huge collection of quite pretty paintings and sculptures, all signed by Hitler. (Dozens of them, I was appalled to see, hung on three walls surrounding the Heidemann marital bed, a fact which appeared to please his wife more than him.)

I may of course eventually be proved wrong, but I thought neither then nor later that he was a crook. If he really had found Hitler diaries it was obvious that the volumes would be subjected to minute examinations and if authentic would be worth a fortune. He would then stand to earn unlimited fame and money. If he found books which turned out to be fakes then, equally obviously, he stood to earn nothing.

In fact, the puzzle of the diaries might have ended shortly after I met him in January 1983. For quite unwittingly (Heidemann has a fine memory and a 'nose' for scoops but lacks education and an intellectual intelligence) he provided me with indications of how the 'diary trail came into being. But the *Sunday Times* had a most conservative editor, and was engaged in a rabid economy drive. The combination of the two made investigation impossible.

There was most certainly a puzzle. I came away sure that there were diaries, or a diary, genuine or not, and I thought that this strange and obsessed man might well find them, whatever they were. When I left him, after two days, I felt that though he may be obsessed by Hitler his claim that he was not himself a Nazi was true. I now believe that the line is too fine for such distinctions to have meaning. Obsession overshadows and indeed obliterates rational thought and morality. And Heidemann's obsession dominated his life and determined all his actions.

By 1982, Heidemann was not only getting hold of the 'diaries' but was also working toward an exclusive interview with a supposedly alive Martin Bormann; had concluded contracts with the East German government towards taking part in the recovery of stolen buried Goering treasures, and was planning the creation in Spain — he had bought property there for it — of a museum of Nazi relics and a new Institute of Contemporary History to rival the one in Munich. It all sounds insane. Yet there is documentary evidence that *Stern* magazine had negotiated contracts for exclusive publicity rights both to the 'Bormann' interview and for the recovery of the Goering haul.

It was in this atmosphere of Nazi sensations that Heidemann paid out the millions *Stern* happily pressed upon him, not for one lot of treasure, the diaries, but a combination of them. The German magazine, greedy for it all, neglected to take even the most minimal precautions about authenticating the 'diaries'. Heidemann's information that Bormann was alive and had not only seen the diaries but had a page from them blown up and framed to hang over his desk in Madrid may sound like schoolboy fantasies but this, along with 'confirmation' from actual living Nazi big-wigs that the diaries were genuine, created a highly-charged atmosphere. Emotional assurances from men who had worked with Hitler that the 'diaries' showed the real Hitler evoked a greater reality than any scientific evidence. *Stern* accepted emotive assurances without ever reading the 62 volumes.

ANYONE WHO knows the literature about Hitler and the Third Reich and who has taken the trouble to read the unpalatable 62 volumes would have to conclude that Konrad Kujau did not create them. A talented draughtsman with a trick memory, Kujau undoubtedly penned them, sometimes from memory of the material others put at his disposal. Nor need one doubt that he drew some of the sketches included in or accompanying the books. Sketching and reciting from memory is one of the party tricks with which he entertains visitors and police in prison. He may also have included some 'Bierstube' gossip of his own, gathered over the years from Nazi cronies.

What is totally beyond his abilities as an unintellectual charming rogue is the coherent psycho-political line which emerges from the books as a whole. Outrageously, a Hitler has been created who is a reasonable and lonely man, forced into a war he did not want. He doesn't like Eastern Europeans and he doesn't like Jews though he regards them with no pronounced violence. This fictional character is far more abusive about his henchmen and generals (who were to be blamed for the 'failures' of his regime) than about those whom he ordered enslaved and murdered. Cleverly, he has been created not by invention but by the omission and organisation of existing material. This required far more experience of dealing with the published material than Kujau had. It is precisely this informed quality which deceived Heidemann.

It may remain impossible to solve this puzzle on the basis of evidence, for this whole case is littered — as is the whole Nazi and neo-Nazi and revisionist scene — with people who lie. What is just as bad is that there seem to be very few people who want to know the truth. No paper in America or Germany has reported the results of the *Sunday Times* enquiry. The case appears to be degenerating into a farce, with Kujau cast as the ideal anti-hero.

The truth may be that the only acceptable Nazi past now is a prettified one, like the film *Holocaust* or the belief that the forging of the 'Hitler diaries' is a petty crime. The real Hitler and his legacy is something the world cannot bear to face. He is still the nightmare, the major unresolved horror in our lives. Anything written about him will be read. But the idea that this man should speak to us now, himself, using the common language, describing commonplace events was, and I think always would be, unacceptable. If it happened it would allow him to become part of a human dimension from which, by virtually universal consent, he has to be excluded. □

Gitta Sereny is the author of Into That Darkness (Picador, £1.50), a study of Franz Stangl, head of the Treblinka extermination camp. She works for the Sunday Times.

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In 1983 we restored customer confidence in the railway and Government confidence in our ability to react to change and meet our targets. In 1984 we shall be building on that confidence and our competitiveness. We shall go after new business. We need to lower our costs further, and this must mean slimming our workforce where it is possible without damaging our service quality. By these means, we can provide investment for the future.

TRANSPORT POLICY

I appreciate there are widely differing views on transport policy. The trade unions have urged the industry to change course from a reduced fares policy which is attracting more passengers and more revenue, to a policy of a general reduction in fares. But this quickly leads to the need for more instead of less support from the taxpayer and ratepayer, and the policy is not a realistic alternative.

VALUE FOR MONEY

With clear objectives and after reducing support from central Government by some 25%, our aim is a railway in 1986 roughly the same size as today, employing some 141,000 people, offering an improved quality of service as a result of higher investment, and carrying more passengers and freight. As railwaymen and women, we have it within ourselves to assure a long term future for our industry. I believe the nation wants us to succeed and will support us.

Extracts from the Chairman's Statement.

British Rail

1983 Annual Report

British Railways Board Annual Report & Accounts 1983
Copies are available from HMSO, Price £4.00.

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REWRITING HISTORY

1946: Five British airfields were secretly converted to handle B-29 US Air Force atomic bombers

In the second extract from his new book Duncan Campbell reveals for the first time how US atomic bases secretly came to Britain*

CONVENTIONAL HISTORY has it that the United States Air Force returned unexpectedly to Britain in July 1948 for a temporary show of armed force during the Soviet blockade of Berlin. This history is quite false. The truth is that a mere 11 months after the world was awed by the atomic destruction of Hiroshima, the US was ready to use the bomb again, against its wartime Russian allies. In Britain, a single military official agreed — without asking or consulting the Cabinet, Parliament, the public, or any government ministers — that five secret US atomic bombing bases should then be constructed in the UK.

Most important British official records of early discussions about United States bases have been withheld from the Public Records Office. But documents obtained by the *New Statesman* from United States official archives, which have never before been published in Britain, reveal that the British military official, Royal Air Force Chief of Staff Lord Tedder, agreed with his American counterpart, Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, that the construction of the atomic bases should, in order to avoid controversy, be 'handled as routine and not attract special attention'.

The secret 'Spaatz-Tedder Agreement' was struck on 6 July 1946, during a three-day visit by Spaatz to London. According to the US official record of Spaatz's visit (the agreement does not appear to have been put in writing) Tedder told Spaatz that the US requirement for certain RAF bases to be converted to handle atom bombs 'would be met without any difficulty and he (Tedder) would go ahead on them'.

Five RAF bomber airfields — Scampton in Lincolnshire, and four in East Anglia — Lakenheath, Mildenhall, Marham, and Bassingbourn — were earmarked for US atomic bombers if the need arose. In order to assemble, test and load the atom bomb, special, unique buildings and loading bays were built at each of the bases. The atomic bases were made ready at great speed. A month after Spaatz's visit in August 1946, a senior official from the Manhattan District (the code-name for the US atomic bomb project), Colonel E.E. Kirkpatrick, visited England to supervise the construction of the buildings and the installation of specialised equipment to assemble and load bombs of the type that had destroyed Nagasaki. Atomic bomb bases in Britain and in Guam in the Pacific were ready for use at the start of 1947.

The US Air Force thus began planning for an atomic war against the Soviet Union within a month of destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki; in such a war, it was anticipated, British bases would play the key role.

Plans for the United States to 'strike the first blow' against the USSR with atomic weapons were prepared in September 1945, just a month after the surrender of Japan, according to now public records of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. The same official records chart how, in October 1945, the Joint Chiefs planned to 'seize and hold', if need be, airfields in the United Kingdom and the Far East from which to mount atomic bomb raids against the USSR.

The early bombs were of the 'Fat Man' variety which had wiped out Nagasaki. Nine of these 'B-3' bombs were available in July 1946. Two years later, the United States had a stockpile of 50. There were 30 B-29 Superfortress bombers, codenamed 'Silverplate', which had been converted to drop atomic weapons.

The first detailed plan for an atomic war was 'Broiler', in 1947. This 'Joint Outline Emergency War Plan' listed 24 Soviet cities for destruction, emphasising, as with Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the destruction of population rather than industrial assets or military forces. Broiler was one in a long series of continually amended and updated war plans. The last plan to be made before the Soviets themselves detonated an atomic bomb — codenamed 'Offtackle' — reflected the growth in the US nuclear arsenal. Some 220 bombs would be directed against 104 Soviet targets, all cities. Another 72 bombs would remain in reserve.

Strategic Air Command (SAC), the bomber component of the United States Air Force, was set up in March 1946. Tours to Europe by SAC bombers began in June 1947, as part of the command's 'mobility plan'. In the spring of 1948 came the Berlin crisis. As it built up, the US Ambassador in London asked that three groups of heavy bombers should be allowed to come to Britain, as a temporary show of strength. On 28 June 1948, this was agreed by a small Cabinet committee — whose identity or existence, let alone agenda — was quite unknown to the public.

To the British Cabinet, the move seemed a reasonable temporary gesture at a time of alarm; publicly, they invoked what were described as 'informal and longstanding arrangements between the USAF and the RAF for visits of goodwill. . .' (a disingenuous reference to the Spaatz-Tedder agreement). Privately, however, the United States had long-term intentions right from the start. Access to British bases was of critical importance in fast developing atomic warfare plans. US Defense Secretary James Forrestal wrote in his diary on the day the bombers arrived in Britain, 17 July 1948, that:

> We have the opportunity now of sending these planes, and once sent, they would become somewhat of an accepted fixture.

A cluster of RAF bases, forming the USAF Third Air Division (Provisional), came under US control on 16 July 1948. The bomb groups which then arrived at Marham, Waddington and Scampton airfields for 'operational training' were due to stay at first for just 30 days. This was soon extended to 60; and when the first bombers left, they were replaced by other groups on 'rotation', a process which was then continued in effect for 15 years. With a convenient range to the Soviet Union, and facing the United States across the Atlantic, Britain was the ideal forward base; truly, an unsinkable aircraft carrier.

The first six squadrons of B-29 Superfortresses arrived in July 1948. They were not 'Silverplate' models, although that was unknown to the public (and the British and Soviet governments) at the time. At the end of 1948, the 30 Silverplate aircraft were still at their US home base of Roswell, New Mexico. Gradually the rest of the force was converted, and the first A-bomb carriers came to England in 1949.

At first, no questions were raised at the political level about the terms and conditions of the Americans' tenure, despite the aircraft's capabilities. The government did not ask the Americans whether they intended to store the atomic bomb in England — despite the fact that, at a lower level, RAF officials were in no doubt as to USAF intentions. The legacy of this casualness is with us today. The difficulty for Britain of later trying to put British interests in the use of the bases on a firmer footing without seeming distrustful (at a time when close and sensitive US-UK collaboration was being

**The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier*, published this week by Michael Joseph (£6.95 pb).

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sought) led directly to the inadequacy and ambiguity of later statements on the bases.

IN AUGUST 1948, a month after it was first established, the Third Air Division at Marham was made a permanent military unit. Lord Tedder's RAF Deputy Chief of Staff, Sir William Dickson, proposed that the US bases should remain designated as Royal Air Force stations — a cosmetic disguise intended to alleviate local hostility to the presence of foreign military forces on British soil in peacetime. The proposal was accepted and, on this basis, almost all American bases in Britain are described as 'RAF' bases, and have an RAF 'commander'. These 'commanders' — Squadron Leaders who are two or three ranks inferior to the US commanding officer — are in reality local liaison officers with no rights or responsibilities beyond community relations.

In November 1948, four months after the first B-29s landed, the US Air Force intimated to the RAF that they would like a permanent presence in Britain. This was accepted by the Air Ministry, but not, apparently, submitted to the Foreign Office for political decision until a year later. A search began for suitable sites — this time, much further inland, and thus behind defensive fighter cover. The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, accepted the new, permanent bases, but wanted safeguards on critical aspects. The conditions were twofold.

First, Britain must have the right to terminate the base arrangements. Second, what would be the position if the United States unilaterally wished to mount military operations from British bases, when Britain was not at war; or, for that matter, disagreed on policy?

It was later claimed by the Foreign Office that the US Ambassador had, in 1948, given Mr Bevin assurances that Britain would be consulted about any plans for the use of US bombers from Britain. These assurances proved somewhat ephemeral. They were not written down, nor mentioned in any negotiation up to 1952. Only a decade later were they reported in official statements.

The next stage in Strategic Air Command's expansion began early in 1950. Under a new 'Ambassador's Agreement', four new airfields were given to the USAF for full development. They were Greenham Common, Upper Heyford, Fairford and Brize Norton. All are still earmarked for US use in war (although Brize Norton is primarily an RAF transport base). The Ambassador's Agreement was so called because it was signed between the US Ambassador, Lewis Douglas, and the British Air Under-Secretary, Aidan Crawley. The Ambassador's Agreement has been withheld from the Public Record Office.

In June 1950 the Korean war began. The new crisis provoked further raising of the nuclear stakes by the US supreme military command, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. During June they urged the President and the US Atomic Energy Commission to allow the non-nuclear components of the atom bomb stockpile to be moved to the British bases. In the event of a general world war, only the nuclear cores would need to be flown over, saving time and risk. On 11 July 1950 the President agreed. If war came, SAC had now some 250 nuclear-capable bombers, plus the stocks to match. The US had moved one step closer to holding complete atom bombs on UK soil.

American policymakers saw clearly that almost all of their nuclear capacity depended on Britain. That capacity was too important to the US to allow a decision on its use to be shared in London. The view of the Air Force Secretary, Thomas K. Finletter, was clear. A Top Secret memorandum he wrote on 7 July 1950 to the US Secretary of Defense noted:

> We are dependent at this moment almost entirely on the availability of UK bases for the launching of our strategic countermeasures.
>
> I haven't any real doubt but that the British will come along if we do get engaged in war. But the question is when. I do not like at all the fact that we are almost entirely dependent on the UK. . .
>
> I know (the British) well enough to know that sometimes they can be very slow; and this strategic countermeasure is something which cannot afford to be held up while the British cabinet is debating about things.

The fears of backbench MPs that Britain might face annihilation without consultation were sharpened by the overt threat to use atomic weapons in Korea which President Truman made at a press conference on 30 November 1950. Nuclear weapons had now become an instrument of politics, and a tool of power adaptable to circumstances short of all-out warfare.

THE STRUGGLE waged by Attlee and Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison to get a definitive agreement with the Americans failed utterly. The Americans continued to refuse to give formal assurances, and tried to change the argument. They maintained, in 1951, that neither politically nor legally could the US President curtail his right to direct United States forces in the use of nuclear weapons.

A meeting held between General Omar Bradley, the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, and British Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks on 14 September 1951 produced, finally, an agreement that prior discussion with the British was necessary before the United States launched an atomic attack from Britain. In October 1951, a General Election was called in Britain, and Franks — sensing that this contentious issue might surface during the election campaign — asked the US National Security Council to agree a draft statement, to be made public if Britain so required in future. The critical passage promised that the use of the airbases and facilities in Britain

> . . .naturally remains a matter for joint decision in the light of the circumstances at the time. . .

Early in 1952, Churchill visited Washington to discuss these and other matters with President Truman. They met on the presidential yacht, *Williamsburg*, and, on 9 January 1952, issued a communiqué which remains the sole and fundamental source document referring to any right the British government may have to control the use of US bases in emergency:

> Under arrangements made for the common defence, the United States has the use of certain bases in the United Kingdom. We reaffirm the understanding that the use of these bases in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by Her Majesty's government and the United States government in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Next week: Whose finger on the nuclear trigger?

For thirty years since then this communiqué — which has not the status of treaty, agreement or contract — has been referred to by both governments on any occasion that the matter has been raised. It has the diplomatic merit of having no clear meaning and thus allowing the British government to promise the British people an assurance which it knows the US government would not or could not deliver, and certainly would never guarantee. □

BUSINESS

Young's old deals

Charles Raw digs up some curious property transactions

WHAT HAS David Young, chairman of the Manpower Services Commission and the Thatcher favourite currently being tipped for a key role at Downing Street, got in common with John Silkin, Labour's Tribunite defence spokesman and once a contender for the party's leadership? Today very little, but some 20 years ago they both belonged to a small band of property developers who received finance from a little-known charity.

It's a curious story. The charity concerned is the Jewish Colonization Association. It was set up in 1891 by a European businessman, Baron de Hirsch, who gave it a substantial part of his fortune after his son was killed. Its assets today are some £7 million. The main purpose of the charity was and is to help Jewish refugees to resettle.

Although the charity makes outright grants, its underlying philosophy is to encourage its beneficiaries to become self-supporting. It helps them set up in business or on farms with loans on easy terms. The borrowers are expected to repay, but naturally sometimes cannot and the resulting accumulated losses of the charity are some £2 million. The board of the JCA is composed of leading members of the Jewish communities in Britain, France and the United States. Sir Keith Joseph has been a director since 1952, when not in government.

I first came across the JCA a decade ago, when researching the early business career of energy secretary Peter Walker for my book on Slater, Walker. In 1957 the JCA had loaned £100,000 to a property company of Bernard Myers, the father of Walker's subsequent early partner in the property business. As Myers had twice been bankrupt, it seemed a strange loan to make, although in the event no money was lost.

Later I discovered that in 1960 the JCA had played a leading part in setting up another property developer, the late Gabriel Harrison, whose group was to become a victim of the 1970s property crash (the JCA loans had long before been repaid). Also in 1960 the JCA had set up a subsidiary, Icasso, through which in the next few years it was to make a number of property loans. Icasso was managed by the late

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Tory MP, Sir Henry d'Avigdor Goldsmid, a director of the JCA and also chairman of the Anglo-Israel Bank, the London subsidiary of the major Israeli bank, Bank Leumi. Apparently the bank itself provided half Icasso's funds, while the JCA provided the other half.

By the end of 1963, Icasso had £376,000 of loans outstanding. Of this, £70,000 had been lent in November 1962 to the Silkin family company, Wayfegs, for a controversial land development in South Wales. The profits made in this deal caused a storm in the Labour Party when they came to light in 1974, although the role of Icasso never surfaced. Indeed Silkin himself told me that he was never aware that any money had come from a charity, that the source of the funds had been found by a broker and was cheaper than any alternative. He said that he did not meet d'Avigdor Goldsmid until some years later when Sir Henry, who had by then become chairman of Pergamon Press after the great Maxwell scandal, invited him to join the board.

Wayfegs repaid the Icasso loan in April 1965, borrowing instead directly from the Anglo-Israel bank. At the end of that year the JCA, via Icasso, lent £80,000 to Eldonwall Estates, a company in a group that David Young had started some three years before with the backing of the Gestetner duplicator family. The interest charged was a full market rate, but at the time the commercial banks were under strict instructions from the Bank of England not to lend more money for property development and Young told me that he was then up to his borrowing limit with Barclays. He thought that the introduction had come through a bank, but he had never met Sir Henry.

NEITHER YOUNG nor Silkin can be criticised for seeking money for their businesses from whatever source, on the best possible terms. So far as the JCA is concerned, however, the issue is more complicated. It was perfectly proper, as the charity argues, for it to try to improve the yield on its investment portfolio, so that it had more income from which to make outright charitable grants. On the other hand, because it also operated by making charitable loans, the question arises as to whether it was maintaining the right balance between these loans and quite risky commercial loans. In any event, it was a curious episode and clearly it thought better of it, because Icasso's activities were discontinued in 1967 — none of those involved seem today to be able to remember why.

The particular development for which Young's company received the Icasso loan — a housing estate in Wiltshire — was not a financial success (although the loan and interest were fully repaid by August 1968). But his group prospered and was sold in June 1970 for a total price of about £2,750,000 to a fast-expanding property empire called Town & City. The Young family would not have received all of this, as Eldonwall had other shareholders; furthermore the purchase price was to be paid in Town & City shares in stages over the next few years.

Town & City reached the peak of its fortunes in 1974, when it merged with Sterling Guarantee Trust, a property company founded by a long-time family friend of Young's, Jeffrey Sterling, now chairman of the shipping company P & O and another favourite Thatcher businessman (he succeded Young as Sir Keith Joseph's industrial adviser). But then came the great 1974 property crash and Town & City nearly went under. It was saved by the long, hard efforts of Sterling, but when Young came to sell his Town & City shares the price had not recovered to the level of the original transaction. Still, he probably made of the order of £500,000.

Silkin seems to have been even less lucky. In the 1974 furore over the profits of the family company Wayfegs from the Welsh property transactions, it was alleged that the gross profit made was over £350,000. Silkin himself said the net profit was just over £52,000. The accounts of Wayfegs, however, show that it kept losing huge amounts of money, having on three separate occasions — in 1971/72, 1973/74 and 1975/76 — to write off or dispose of debts at large losses. The total loss was no less than £155,000.

I tried unsuccessfully to find out about this extraordinary series of losses: Silkin was reluctant to discuss them and seemed unable to remember the details. But the result was that virtually all the surplus created by the property sales (after £20,000 of tax) was eaten up, so that when the company was allowed to become defunct after 1976, it had only £1,800 of assets. It was compulsorily struck off the register at Companies House in 1978. □

FEEDBACK

Missing the post

THE TORIES want to render the Labour Party ineffectual by cutting the unions' political levies. The Labour Party needs new ways of raising money, and new ways of dealing with the fact that it no longer has the natural support of unionised workers. Computer direct mailing could be the answer to both problems.

Richard Viguerie, one of the key men in the American New Right, is credited with the invention of political direct mail. He began his career by raising money for a right-wing pressure group called Young Americans for Freedom. He found it embarrassing to ask people for money in person so he stayed in his office and wrote begging letters and it worked. He got the money.

The key to his later success in business on his own account was the Goldwater campaign list. The Clerk of the House of Representatives had a record, required by US electoral law, of the names and addresses of 12,500 people who had given more than £30 to Barry Goldwater in the 1964 election campaign. Viguerie (and a few helpers) copied down all the names and put them into a computer. Later he raised money for George Wallace when he was the Right's alternative to Gerald Ford. He raised money for gun lobbies. He sent out mailings to galvanise support against the Panama Canal Treaty. And after each campaign, win or lose, Viguerie had one more set of names and addresses in his machine. He now claims to have the names of over *four million* supporters of right-wing causes.

The Labour Party may not like Viguerie's politics, or the association with the technology of surveillance and the erosion of privacy. But direct mail can play whatever game one wants to play; it can inform, it can concert action, and it can raise money — for any cause.

A recent SDP mailing does two of these things. It contains a long letter from David Owen telling the reader what is wrong with the country and why the country needs the SDP, and it asks for money. It contains a well-known opinion-forming device: the leading questionnaire. Question 3 asks: 'Do you believe that the swings between Labour and Conservative governments have been harmful to Britain?' and the reader can tick either 'Yes' or 'No'.

The SDP has been using direct mail for the last three years. Its first experiences were not happy. The party's members list was put on the Midland Bank's computer in Sheffield, at a cost of £1 a member. But the computer was programmed to keep records of company shareholders, and was unable to distinguish between groups of SDP members with different interests or living in one part of the country. Detailed information about each member was available in a code against each individual entry, but could only be obtained by printing out the whole list — at a cost of £650. The SDP is now advised by the American firm that organises the Democratic Party's mailings, and is buying in its own computer.

The Conservatives used direct mailing on an experimental basis in the general election and are pushing ahead with it.

The first mailing usually costs money. The machinery is expensive and you may have to pay for membership lists. The Labour Party begins with its own known members. It could then buy or rent the list of subscribers to every left of centre publication. It could buy or rent the lists of those charities that are vaguely leftish. The names are accumulated. They can also be cross-indexed. Each name could be coded as 'Party member; strong on ecology; CND' or whatever. Each time you solicit funds by mailing, the responses can be logged so that the machine can quickly print up 'All people in the North of England who gave more than £20'.

Direct mailing is expensive but it is efficient because it is focused. Newspaper, TV and hoarding advertising is charged at the rate of the total potential audience. Everybody might be in the market for Persil but at least half of the audience will not be interested in the Labour Party. Direct mail focuses on people who are either known sympathisers or people who are likely to be.

Direct mail also makes people feel involved. Far from thinking of them as 'junk mail', lots of people in the US like the political direct mailings and look to them for guidance on political issues.

But don't the door-to-door canvass and the political meeting do the same sorts of thing better because people meet face to face? They do, but canvassing is very expensive in effort, and very few people go to political meetings.

If the Labour Party is going to end this century thinking it will get its message across by holding meetings, it might as well go back to open-air hustings and trying to buy votes with Brown Ale. Like it or not, we live in a privatised world. People do not spend their lives in public meetings. People live in separate little units called 'home'. Direct mail reaches them there.

Steve Bruce

Steve Bruce is an expert in conservative Protestant politics and the American New Right at the Queen's University of Belfast.

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DIARY

Martin Jacques

The major personal event of the last week has been the installation of an answerphone. I have been trying to avoid the inevitable, but finally received an ultimatum from the other three people I share the house with who were fed up with acting as my personal secretary. The novelty hasn't yet worn off. I left a demented birthday message for my sister's daughter on it on Saturday afternoon: only when I got back in the early evening did I think about the other people who must have phoned in and thought that I had finally flipped.

Apart from my new toy, my interaction with the world over this last seven days has been pretty non-existent. For about ten days every month, I live a desperate existence as we try to meet the deadlines for *Marxism Today*. Life is ruthlessly pared down to that single objective — and those 'non-essential' things that I have previously somewhat carelessly agreed to all too often get postponed, cancelled or missed in a tide of panic and guilt. The following week is my re-entry phase: patching up strained relationships and confronting that mounting pile of dirty washing. *MT*'s problem is that the staff has not grown in step with the expansion of the magazine: there are just four of us, of whom only one (me) is editorial.

○

What a pleasure it was last week, looking through the dailies and seeing those full-page ads in defence of the metropolitan councils. One of the less remarked upon virtues of the present GLC administration has been its contribution to the image and style of the Left. When it comes to how to sell itself visually, the Left too often makes a virtue of deterrence. This is not just for financial reasons. For many, what *really* matters is not image but content — the message is the message. As a consequence, the Left so frequently looks out of touch and out of date. We live in a society where appearance and image count for much — billboards, TV commercials, clothes, pop videos. And I, for one, enjoy it. Design, style and communication should be integral to what we do, not accessories. They are skills we must acquire and hire, not despise. Yet we shun — with notable exceptions, like Nalgo — the professional techniques of advertising agencies and marketing organisations as if it was all hype and false consciousness. Well it's not. So it's good to see the GLC presenting its case in such a catchy and modern way. Why, people might even read the stuff!

○

I have found myself over the last few weeks engaged in numerous discussions about the miners' strike. My instincts tell me this is going to be a long one, a very long one. On the one hand a group of workers with a long tradition of militant collectivity and a lot to lose; on the other hand a government which has been limbering up for a full-scale defeat of the miners ever since it took office in 1979. The irresistible force meets the immovable object: this could be a dispute which, in terms of longevity, looks more like the '20s than the postwar period. Let's hope, though, that that's where the analogy ends.

After the last election there was a current of opinion that anticipated that Thatcher Mark II (no pun intended) would lose its radicalism and settle for a safer, less Thatcherite trajectory. But the Lawson budget and the forthcoming proposals on social security, for example, suggest otherwise. There is a sense, though, in which this administration is looking a bit different from the last. One of the achievements of Thatcherism has been the way it has redefined the political terrain and reordered the political agenda. It seized and has subsequently held the ideological initiative. This no longer looks quite so certain. Previously, the Thatcherites were making the running and disorganising the opposition. Now, on a number of important issues, they are not having things so much their own way. Cruise was one instance. GCHQ is a more recent one. Ratecapping and the metropolitan councils are the current examples. And what characterises this latest cluster of issues is that the Tories' position on each looks — to the outsider — like an ill-conceived partisan lunge at the labour movement. As a consequence they at least appear to have lost some of their wider sense of direction and momentum.

Of course, their position is safe, cushioned by an enormous parliamentary majority. But passing legislation should never be confused with winning the argument. What distinguishes these recent controversies is that the Tories have been losing the arguments. On these issues, the

labour movement is part of a broad anti-Thatcherite swathe of opinion stretching from the Left to the Tory wets. A few more cases of this and the Thatcherites will truly have begun to ship ideological water. There is, though, a more pessimistic reading of the situation. If they get away with these measures and aren't ideologically holed too badly in the accompanying arguments, what may begin to emerge is a Thatcherite consensus steeled by a more and more authoritarian state. Either scenario remains a possibility.

○

When I emerged from last week's deadlines it was to a beautiful sunny day. I don't know what it is about the promised onset of summer, but it always has a dramatic effect on my psyche. Summer is a sensual experience. Which reminds me, I must reinstate the regular sporting activity I used to do before this present job drove a horse-and-carriage through my lifestyle. But things are looking up. I've found some extremely accessible and very under-utilised squash courts attached to a medical school very close to where I work. What could be more convenient (or cheaper)? This, I should add, is not a new kind of discovery. In the late '60s a friend of mine introduced me to similar medical school courts bang in the middle of London's West End. I used them for well over a decade and I never had to resort to white coat and stethoscope on the courts to demonstrate the legitimacy of my presence. On the contrary, I eventually came to feel like one of the grand old men (sic) of the courts. What I could never really understand was why, since access was so easy, there wasn't a swarm of others like me? The only explanation I can think of is that the aura of the medical school is so strong that it positively discourages interlopers like myself. The mystique of privilege. Jesus, I hope I haven't given the game away.

ROGER WODDIS

Crackers

Professor Patrick Minford, of Liverpool University, proposes in the journal of the Institute of Economic Affairs the abolition of the welfare state and wholesale privatisation from education to the National Health Service.

Professor Minford, whose massive mind
Leaves Albert Einstein far behind,
Believes there's nothing you can't kill,
Provided that you have the will.
What Britain clearly needs today
Is someone who will sweep away
The narrow and restricting ties
That hinder pirate enterprise,
Proclaiming in a business organ
The holy creed of Captain Morgan.

A few will doubt that he is right,
This madly modern troglodyte,
Who openly declares his cause:
The public good in private clause.
This prompts the question — why stop there?
We could include the sun and air,
The Army and the boys in blue,
And other institutions, too,
Such as (if he was rightly priced)
The risen and go-getting Christ.

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Refusing to go

Stephen Cohen on the pressure on a unique dissident to emigrate and take his reformist ideas with him

ROY MEDVEDEV — the renowned nonconformist historian and a leading Soviet dissident for 15 years — is in grave danger. Since late February, Soviet authorities have threatened him with criminal prosecution, while a posse of policemen follow his every move and bar all visitors from his Moscow apartment.

These actions seem designed to force Medvedev, the last major dissident in the Soviet capital, to leave the country. His twin brother Zhores, a biochemist and fellow-dissident, has lived in involuntary exile in London since 1973. Medvedev has withstood previous threats and, unlike many prominent dissidents, steadfastly refused to emigrate.

But given the growing mood of cold war intolerance in official circles — revised laws in effect since February now make the dissemination of virtually any 'information' about Soviet life a criminal offence — a showdown may be imminent. The 58-year-old Medvedev could be banished to a remote region of the Soviet Union, cut off from family and friends who have sustained him since he was deprived of employment in 1971, or even imprisoned.

Medvedev's plight is especially meaningful because he has been so unfairly defamed by people who should know better. A fiercely independent and honourable man, he has never conformed to popular conceptions of a Soviet dissident. Whereas most liberal activists now reject the entire Soviet system and socialist idea, Medvedev remains a pro-Soviet, democratic-socialist reformer. And whereas other leading dissidents urged the United States to repudiate detente in the 1970s, he has always protested against cold war American policies as well as repressive Soviet behaviour at home and abroad.

As a result, many Soviet emigrés, whose political tolerance does not greatly exceed that of their former government, have denounced Medvedev as a 'betrayer' or even a KGB 'agent'. The late US Senator Henry Jackson likened him to 'certain Jews [who] fronted for Goering, Goebbels, and Hitler'. And even a few American journalists, who eagerly exploited Medvedev's careful analysis of Soviet affairs in Moscow, later ungratefully described him as a 'conduit' for official Soviet views. There is no evidence for any of these charges.

The real political significance of Medvedev is his long-standing role as the most outspoken Soviet advocate of gradual liberalization from above. He believes that such changes might be introduced by the ruling Communist Party given the right combination of a reform-minded leadership, as existed under Nikita Khrushchev, and detente-like international conditions.

Therefore, Medvedev insists that Soviet dissidents should develop and circulate loyal reformist ideas for eventual 'consumers' in the party-state elite, and not direct extremist or anti-Soviet appeals to Western governments. There is, he argues, no other hopeful prospect for liberal changes in Soviet policy.

Born in 1925, Medvedev's entire life has been shaped by dramatic changes in official policy. His father, a young army officer and Communist Party philosopher, died in Stalin's purges of the late 1930s. The Medvedev brothers served in the Red Army during World War II and acquired post-graduate educations, but they remained stigmatized politically and professionally as children of an 'enemy of the people' until their father was legally exonerated during Khrushchev's de-Stalinization in 1956. That same year, Roy joined the Communist Party, and in the 1960s made a successful career as an editor and department head in research institutions of the prestigious Academy of Pedagogical Sciences.

His life was changed again by Khrushchev's sudden overthrow in 1964 and the retrograde policies of the new Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership. Alarmed by those developments, Medvedev founded a secret typescript magazine of anti-Stalinist and democratic ideas that circulated for seven years among a small group of establishment intellectuals. In 1969, circulation of his own monumental historical indictment of the Stalin era, *Let History Judge*, led to his expulsion from the Communist Party and to a full-time career as an uncensored historian and political dissident.

Despite repeated police threats, searches of his apartment, and confiscation of his archives, Medvedev has been remarkably prolific in both roles. His historical writings now include eight books, the most recent, *All Stalin's Men*, having just appeared. Though banned in his homeland, they have been widely translated abroad, establishing his reputation as a major historian. His dissenting writings on contemporary Soviet affairs are equally prolific. Focusing on abuses of power, the lack of civil liberties, structural inefficiencies, and other shortcomings of the system, these writings present a highly informed, analytical picture of the Soviet Union today, and, as in his *On Socialist Democracy*, the most systematic program for liberal reform ever developed by a dissident writer.

Such reformers, however, have rarely fared well in Russia, where tenacious authoritarian traditions have usually bred political immobilism, extremism or despair. Caught between a repressive Soviet leadership and a liberal dissident community that has lost all hope, Medvedev had become a solitary public figure even before his present ordeal.

And yet, he remains unembittered — a ruddy-faced, silver-haired man, professorial in manner, who discusses attacks on him from all sides with bemused humour and without rancour. He even remains optimistic that reformist views exist inside the Communist Party establishment, especially among officials of his own generation. Thus, the accelerated promotion of some younger officials during Yuri Andropov's brief tenure as leader encouraged Medvedev, while the advent of 72-year-old Konstantin Chernenko has not.

It is possible not to share Roy Medvedev's optimistic appraisal of the Soviet system's potential for change. But anyone who cares about the future of that nation, which is so inextricably linked to our own, must admire his courage and be deeply concerned about his fate. □

Camera Press

Roy Medvedev: the only leading dissident who hasn't rejected the Soviet system and socialist idea altogether

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UNIONS

Plotters or plodders

Don Thomson on why a world labour federation is split

ONE OF Western labour's most concerted efforts to organise across frontiers against the company giants may fall apart amid allegations of CIA activity and bureaucratic muddle. On the verge of pushing through a merger of international union federations, the Geneva-based International Federation of Chemical, Energy and Geneva Workers' Unions (ICEF) could be torn apart by bitter wrangles over the recent affiliation of US unions with suspected CIA links.

Over six million workers in 64 countries, most in oil and nuclear industries, are affiliated to the ICEF. The European unions have traditionally dominated the federation under the leadership of General Secretary Charles 'Chips' Levinson, for long a powerful voice in international unionism.

Few US unions had affiliated, partly because a number of those eligible to join have suspiciously close links with the CIA or US government foreign aid programmes. Two in particular, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers and the Glass, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers, have been repeatedly denounced by Levinson for acting against the ICEF in the Third World.

Now ICEF affiliates have been shocked to learn that these union rivals, along with their Third World satellites and the powerful US Teamsters' Union, have just been allowed to affiliate to the ICEF. And, despite their recent entry, the new affiliates have been given full voting rights at the ICEF World Congress. Held every four years, the next one is due on 4 and 5 July this year.

THE FRESH interest of these new affiliates may well be connected to the forthcoming retirement of Chips Levinson and his strategy for combating multinational power. He is responsible for the notion of 'company councils' — regular meetings between worker representatives employed by the same trans-national company. In recent years he had turned upside down conventional orthodoxy on East-West relations with a series of studies on multinational company trade links and buy-back deals with Comecon states. He publicised his views in a widely-acclaimed book, *Vodka-Cola*.

The man expected to succeed him was Pekka Aro, leader of the Finnish paper workers' union and now installed inside the ICEF to learn the ropes. At the same time as the new US affiliates were being accepted into ICEF, a rival candidate for Levinson's job was nominated — Mike Boggs from the US.

Boggs is a senior officer in the international department of the AFL-CIO, the US confederation of unions. The AFL-CIO receives an annual grant of $17 million from the government American International Aid office for its overseas work and it hopes to receive shortly a further $13.8 million to administer the bulk of Reagan's 'Endowment for Democracy' programme, designed to sell the American way abroad.

Latin America is Boggs's special responsibility, where he has worked for the AFL-CIO's programme, the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD). Last November, the AIFLD was described by the *Washington Post* as an 'important ex-officio arm of US foreign policy'. There has long been distrust of the AIFLD among trade unionists because of the number of its officials who have been shown to have CIA connections.

Now, following the rush of new affiliations in March, it looks as though Mike Boggs will win the nomination. (Unions have one vote for every 5,000 members). Canadian and Japanese unions are expected to vote for Boggs. He also has considerable support from Third World countries which may well believe that a strong US presence will mean more cash for the organisation and consequently for them.

The right of new affiliates to vote at the Congress owes a lot to Britain's Moss Evans, President of the ICEF. Although affiliates are traditionally only allowed to vote if they have paid dues for the last six months of the year preceding the Congress, this ruling would have disenfranchised Germany's IG Chemi and Britain's GMB (General and Municipal). Moss Evans moved that new affiliates could vote if they had paid their first dues to the ICEF.

A far less conspiratorial view of the changes comes from Levinson himself. He argues that a desire to join the ICEF is evidence of a radical urge to work with European unions, and that the moves by one of the new affiliates, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, had begun some time ago, following a change in their leadership. Boggs was nominated not by a new affiliate but by an ICEF loyalist union, the rubber workers, who see him as a liberal influence in the AFL-CIO.

As a further argument against conspiracy, there is the long-term future of the 'smokestack' unions in the US. They are up against an adamantly anti-union government and are fighting for industries in decline. Their future may best be defended by combining with European unions, marking a thaw in the post-

THIS ENGLAND

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☐Animal lover Geoff Stringer, concerned that regulars to his local Merseyside pub have been tucking into hedgehog flavoured crisps, has sunk £5,000 in a scheme to produce 'cannibal' crisps, in traffic warden, bank manager and even Arthur Scargill flavours. — *Wolverhampton Express and Star* (S.E. Jones)

☐People were being arrested for shouting the word 'scab' which the police were saying was insulting or offensive behaviour. They had been asked what names they could use and had been told they could shout 'bounder'. — *Guardian* (Robert Jeffcoate)

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war hostilities between US and European unions.

Many of ICEF's members are not reassured. There is talk of European disaffiliations and one UK affiliate, ASTMS, says it fears an intensification of cold war hostilities within labour's international bodies.

At present there are 15 different International Trade Secretariats. The T&GWU and GMB are trying to restructure these 'historic relics'. They want to see a merger between the ICEF and the International Union of Foodworkers. The role of the new body would be to link with other unions, socialist groups and single issue campaigns against specific multinational activities. It is a political programme that reflects frustration with the existing conservative and bureaucratic international labour structures. Some unions, however, might now withdraw, because they distrust the influence of the US unions in any new organisation.

This international row reflects a problem that none of the international organisations has tackled. As one union official said: 'The fact that a few unions can come out of nowhere and seize control reflects the way the European union leadership have never involved their own membership in ICEF work. The consequent lack of a broad-based political programme means there is a political vacuum the US can now exploit.' Or as Moss Evans said: 'I've got a bloody mess on my hands.' □

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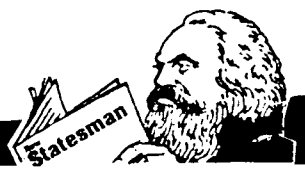

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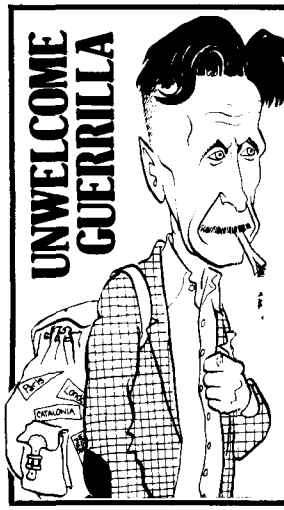

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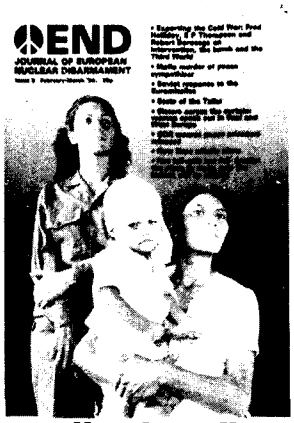

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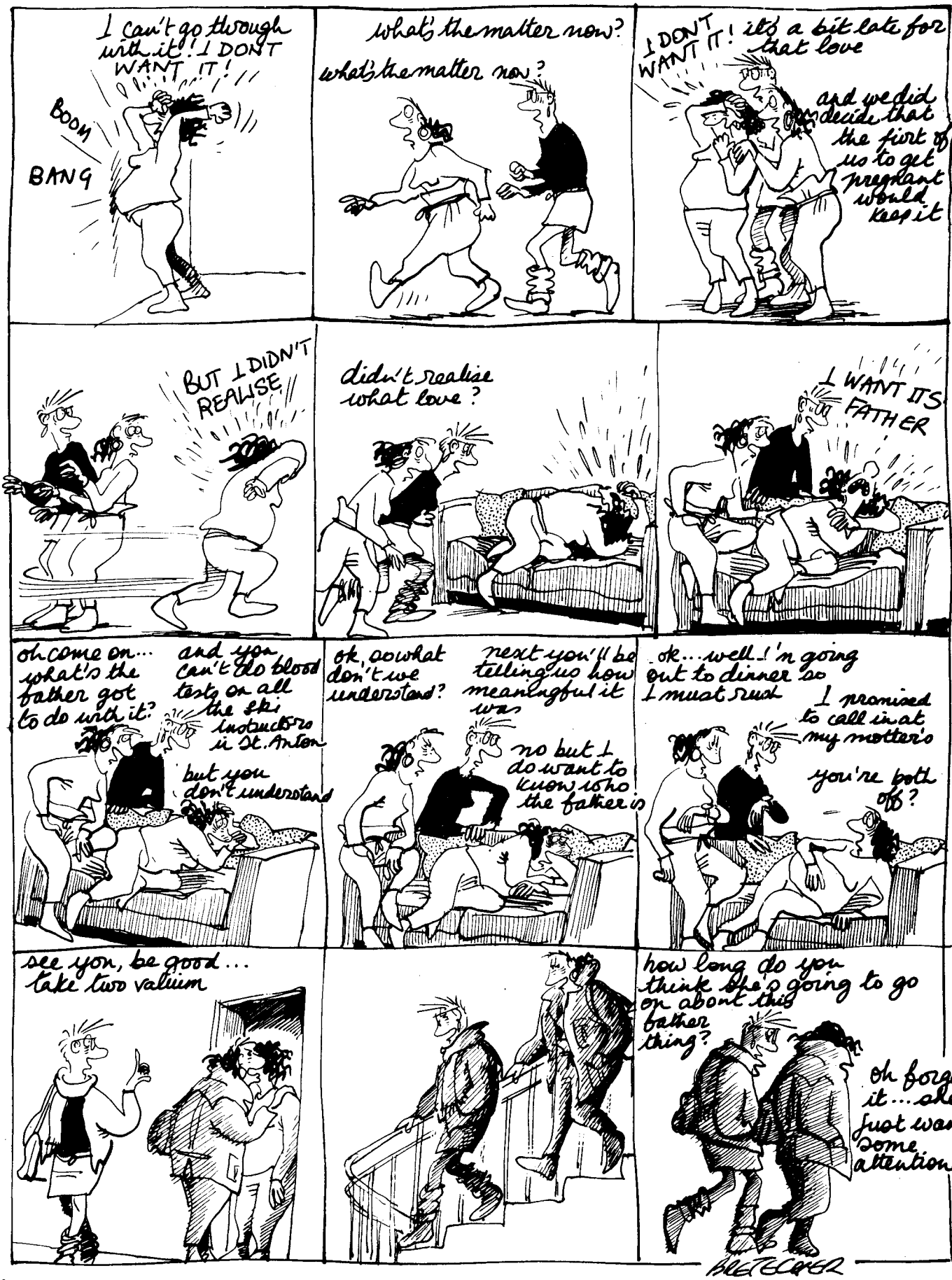
I can't go through with it! I DON'T WANT IT!
BOOM
BANG
what's the matter now?
what's the matter now?
I DON'T WANT IT! it's a bit late for that love
and we did decide that the first of us to get pregnant would keep it
BUT I DIDN'T REALISE
didn't realise what love?
I WANT ITS FATHER
oh come on... what's the father got to do with it?
and you can't do blood tests on all the ski instructors in St. Anton
but you don't understand
ok, so what don't we understand?
next you'll be telling us how meaningful it was
no but I do want to know is who the father is
ok... well I'm going out to dinner so I must rush
I promised to call in at my mother's
you're both off?
see you, be good... take two valium
how long do you think she's going to go on about this father thing?
oh forget it... she just wants some attention
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

More Official Secrets

M.J. Hayes, Wolverhampton Polytechnic

Peter Kellner's account (*NS* 6 April) of the passing of the Official Secrets Act in August 1911 misses an important aspect of the event.

Kellner correctly situates the act against the background of increased international tension and scares which culminated in the Agadir crisis, but he then writes that the Bill reached Parliament on 18 August 1911 attracting little attention since the 'day's main news event concerned a railway strike'.

But it was exactly this interaction of domestic and international events that is important. This was not just 'a' railway strike — it was the crest of the first wave of 'labour unrest' that swept the working class in the years 1910-1914. The country was paralysed by the strike, local government was panicking and sending in appeals for troop deployments and this mood quickly affected the government. Virtually every home-based unit of the British Army was mobilised and armed with live ammunition and a number of strikers and demonstrators were killed in clashes.

On August 19 — the day after the Official Secrets Act was passed — the army was freed from civilian control in keeping order, an act of great symbolic significance (there is little doubt that a good 'constitutional case' could and can be made for army acting independently to deal with civil disorder but here was the government giving it such authority).

In this context the speed of the passing of the Official Secrets Act becomes more understandable and it is not simply to be explained, as Kellner suggests, by a tired house on 'a hot Friday afternoon in the grouse shooting season'. Once the Act was passed it helped contribute to the atmosphere of tension that allowed Lloyd George to use the danger of the international crisis as an argument to bring the railway strike to an end.

This interaction was not planned beforehand but good use was made of the co-incidental timing. And this is not accidental for the 'subversion' that governments always fear is that by their own populations and a government that reduces civil liberties in one sphere is unlikely to stop, as so many miners now have good cause to know.

To ignore these links in the past is simply bad history, to ignore them today is politically naive just as it is equally naive not to recall that the Labour Party that is now concerned about 'civil liberty' both used the Official Secrets Act in its last period of office and appears to have participated in revamping police planning for dealing with national strikes.

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But then, of course, this is not so new, for even in opposition in 1911 Labour MPs had learnt to keep their heads down — as anyone will see who reflects on where the then Labour Party MPs were that Friday afternoon when the Official Secrets Act, 'this fearsome piece of legislation was passed into law'.

Cuban whitewash

Chris Mularczyk, London N5

I was surprised, rather unpleasantly, by Maria Teresa Guerreiro's report on Cuba (*NS* 13 April). It was most definitely propagandist and did not examine the Castro era in much depth at all.

I do not challenge the progress in health and education that Cuba has undoubtedly made nor the intransigent and shortsighted policy towards Cuba pursued by the US. However, I am forced to inquire why your reporter said nothing of the military involvement of Cuban soldiers in Africa and elsewhere in the world. I must also ask why nothing was said about the hardship of rationing and why the questions about indoctrination and censorship were not tackled in any way.

I do not particularly want to see Fidel Castro and his government denigrated. But neither do I want to see total whitewash and a cult of the individual, as exemplified by the headline, 'Thanks to Fidel'. I sincerely hope you will consider seeking a more balanced and analytical report of the situation in Cuba which does not fudge uncomfortable issues and goes a little deeper than just surface impressions of a hotel chambermaid.

Roll problems bilge

Michael Wake, Editor, The Naval Architect, *London SW1*

I was appalled to read the inaccurate reporting and misquotation in the news item by Philip Geddes, 'Navy's new ship has roll problem' (*NS* 6 April).

First, the Royal Navy has not refused delivery of *HMS Peacock*. The vessel was handed over according to contract in October last year.

Second, something was not technically wrong when *HMS Peacock* failed to make an appearance at last autumn's Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition. The shipyard, Hall Russell at Aberdeen, was not able to advance the completion date sufficiently to meet this proposed presentation, principally because certain major machinery items were delivered late.

I also assume that the high degrees of roll reported in the news item were taken from my article in *The Naval Architect*. If this is so, then it is incorrect. The weather conditions were not moderate — *HMS Peacock* recorded these angles of roll (57 degrees and 40 degrees) 'with the wind blowing north east force 9 and gusting 10, *HMS Peacock* averaged 20-22 knots into quite a substantial seaway'. Also, 57 degrees is not the point of 'no return' — 120 degrees would be nearer the actual figure. *HMS Peacock* has a high measure of stability to withstand 100 knot ride winds (typhoon conditions) and it is this factor that gives the vessel the relatively high speed and hence uncomfortable roll.

Modifications along the lines I suggested and which were quoted would not 'land the Navy with another problem'. Larger bilge keels could easily be added to *HMS Peacock* within 24 hours of drydocking.

With regard to engine problems — yes, there have been some teething problems and a change of turbochargers by the engine manufacturers to meet the contract power. The engine beds apparently shifted a 'thou' or two but this is not uncommon in a 'first of class' vessel.

Well-founded criticism is always welcome but surely the first rule of good journalism is to do your homework and get your facts right.

Philip Geddes replies: I dispute Michael Wake's suggestion of 'inaccurate reporting and misquotation.' Where I quoted him, this was verbatim. As for his other points:

1) *HMS Peacock* is not yet in service in any accepted sense of the word. It still hangs in limbo between the builders, Hall Russell, and the Navy, while a decision is made on what modifications, if any, will be made. If it was in service, it should surely be in Hong Kong on the operational duties for which it was designed.

2) Months before the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition, I was told by a Navy official that it was hoped that *Peacock* would be the centrepiece of an exhibition at which many potential buyers for offshore protection vessels would be present.

3) I accept that the weather conditions in which *Peacock* produced so horrifying a roll were not 'moderate'. That word, unfortunately, crept in during the editing of my article. Nevertheless, no ship can possibly roll 120 degrees from the vertical without being underwater, that is, if it is measured rolling from the vertial. 90 degrees either way would be capsizing. A roll of 57 degrees — out of a possible 90 — is, in anyone's language, dangerous and unacceptable and a both ways roll of 97 is close to the 120 degrees quoted by Mr Wake.

4) The 'other problem' I referred to was not that of modification to *HMS Peacock:* it was that such modifications would lead to a design remarkably similar to that of Thornycroft Giles Associates offshore protection vessel.

5) I apologise for referring to Crossley Pielstick as a subsidiary of GEC. This is incorrect.

Obituary — Nan Green

Nan Green, who died on 6 April at the age of 79, was probably best remembered as the Secretary of the International Brigade Association. She followed her husband, George, to Spain during the Civil War, where he was killed. A lifelong socialist and feminist, she had links with a wide range of organisations, founded the Spanish Civil War section of the Marx Memorial Library, worked for Lawrence and Wishart for whom she translated the works of Carrillo and was a supporter of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and, in particular, the Greenham Common women. There will be a memorial meeting to celebrate her life at Friends House at a date to be announced.

Correction

In last week's Roger Woddis poem, 'Strange interdict', a line was omitted from the second stanza. The stanza should have read:

Then turning to his audience,
He said in an aside:
'If I revealed my darkest dreams,
You'd all be terrified;
For GIs who salute the flag
May exit in a plastic bag.'

Our apologies to readers and Roger Woddis for the omission.

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FESTIVALS '84

Michael Rosen

'This year I went to Lancaster . . .'

SOME PEOPLE like to hear writers reading what they have written, and book us to come and read to them. Sometimes these occasions are Festivals. Instead of being the lone attraction for a PTA in Derbyshire, you are part of a circus that hits a town. Sometimes, these occasions admit to the existence of children, and that is where I come in. While the grown-ups are taking in Melvyn Bragg and Linton Kwesi Johnson, the children are shunted along to see Nina Bawden, John Ryan, paint murals with Jan Pienkowski or, perhaps, come and see me. For writers, festivals become a very different way of performing, for one reason, at least: you meet other writers.

For children's writers this is a double strangeness because we meet real writers, you know, ones who write for grown-ups. I remember meeting Adrian Mitchell this way, while George Steiner was busy bullying a meeting with that old critical rubbish about major and minor authors, and all that. On another occasion, a festival organiser teamed me up with Roger McGough and Bob Dixon (a Marxist critic of children's books). It all took place in a large, nearly empty Harrogate hotel-room, and Roger ended up looking like a bit of dried fruit.

This year I went to Lancaster.

I left my car in the catacombs of Euston station wondering where I was supposed to 'endorse my ticket'. It was a wet Friday night and I headed north on the Carlisle train armed with *New Society* and *Sanity* and a pile of books. A moment of sadness hits me from *New Society* as I look at Hackney's deportees, the Hasbudaks, staring out at me from the page. They have figured in songs, chants and congas on the demos for them round our way in the last six months. Then I get stuck into an amazing book: *One Life is Not Enough* by Lore Wolf (People's Publications). It is an account by a German Communist woman of her fight against the Nazis 1930-1945. Image after image engulfs me as I sit there in the Inter-City 125. One of them is of her organising starving, weakened prisoners, on board a train that's waiting outside Belsen, to stick their arms out of the window so that the low-flying American bombers can see that it is full of prisoners. Gripping book. I am left wondering one thing: why doesn't she mention the Jews?

I'm met by Brenda (whom I don't know); she is armed with a copy of my book so that I don't have to go soliciting on Lancaster station. Back at her place we discover that husband Nick, Brenda and I have crossed paths, just missing each other, in and out of student revolts, the Sixties and all that. That night I run along his learned shelves discovering Marxism, individualism, structuralism and not-very-easy-to-understand-ism.

In the morning, it is down to the Duke's Playhouse. I'm on first thing. I'm a presenter of cheques to young winners in a literary competition that I helped judge some weeks before. Sometimes these events can be a bit limp, but today it is a good one, because the local theatre group acts out the winners' pieces. One of them is a nice absurd play about the Four Minute Warning. The family panic when they hear the news and someone rushes out to find the white paint. They can't find it. 'It's all right,' says dad, 'it's not the end of the world.' I tell a story about my car being thief-proof — it's not fit to be nicked. I ask you, what Hackney youth would want to do a TDA on a 1970 Renault 4? Some joy-ride. I tell another one about Mrs Young, 90 last week, two doors down from us, who hates everything. She hated the man upstairs and, when he moved out, she hated the women upstairs. When they moved and there was no one upstairs she hated him as well. She even complained when the council planted trees out the back of our houses.

I get a call from Harry Rée, who is known to me because he is a friend of my dad and happens to be my ex-head-teacher. He is known to others as a radical educationist and an Anglo-French resistance fighter. He lives up here and we are going to meet at midday. In the meantime there is a group of us sitting round a table in the theatre caff, gossiping about festivals. There's the story about Kit Wright. He had been on, the day before, reading his poems, but no one had warned the good people of Lancaster that he wasn't doing his kids-books bit. So he had an audience

Thirty-seventh Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts 8-24 June

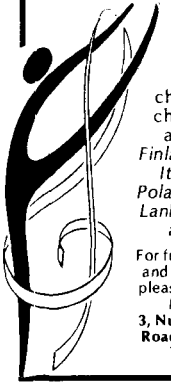
'Unique, joyous, valuable institution, with its own marked flavour and very high standards. . . This year there is a new breath in the air, new wind in the Festival sails.' THE SUNDAY TIMES, 19 June 1983

'This year at the Aldeburgh Festival no-one could miss the fact that much of the old spirit had returned. There are a number of explanations, not least that the appointment of a whole bevy of young artistic directors has brought a new vigour to many of the programmes.' THE GUARDIAN, 28 June 1983

Full details of events, special mid-week packages with local hotels and Festival Train are available: send a stamped addressed envelope to:
Aldeburgh Foundation, High Street, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5AX.
Box Office Aldeburgh (072 085) 3543.

34th King's Lynn Festival
20th to 28th July
The 1984 Festival will have a Venetian theme
Artists appearing include
I Nuovi Virtuosi di Roma
Collegium Aureum
English Chamber Orchestra
Choir of King's College, Cambridge
Tallis Chamber Choir
Patron: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother
34th King's Lynn FESTIVAL
Consort of Musicke
Endellion String Quartet
Baroque Brass of London
Jorge Bolet
Gillian Weir
Royal Artillery Band and Orchestra
Harvey and the Wallbangers
Timothy West
Exhibitions include
The Venetian Scene
Dame Elisabeth Frink
Full brochure available from KING'S LYNN FESTIVAL OFFICE, KING STREET, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK

Aberdeen International Youth Festival
8-18 August



Symphony and chamber orchestras, choirs, dance groups and bands from: *Finland, France, Israel, Italy, Japan, Peru, Poland, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Trinidad, U.S.A. and Venezuela.*
For full programme details and booking information please contact: **GENERAL MANAGER AIYF, 3, Nutborn House, Clifton Road, London SW19 4QT Tel: (01) 946 2995**

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made up of high-art poetry fans and kids all eager to hear about Dave Dirt and the birds nesting in the bra on the washing line. The people round the table are delighted and amazed that he managed the whole thing brilliantly. I wait to hear Kit's version of the story, when next we meet. Then there's a story about Edward Bond stretched out on the floor of the Festival office with someone praying quietly by his side. In fact, he had a bad back and someone was giving him his cheque or something. There's another one about some poet strolling off at half-time, too indifferent or too drunk to know that he was due on for a second half.

Then Harry comes. He looks ageless as ever. Maybe this is because of his collar. You remember those dashing pictures of Auden and Spender with sports jackets and open-neck shirt-collars up front and sides — well Harry's still got his like that. He conjures up images of *Picture Post*, GPO films and Virol ads. He's a great innovator. He organises a kind of mail-order catalogue of French children's books for secondary-school children learning French over here. A very simple, brilliant idea, and 900 per cent better than all that *'Ou est Toto? Toto est dans le jardin'*.

After a potato-in-its-jacket and curried veg., I'm on again. Actually, I'm preceded by an act that I can hear from my dressing room which involves people throwing cold porridge at each other. I get stuck into Bob Sutcliffe's *Hard Times: The World Economy in Turmoil* (Pluto). Screams from two hundred children reach me . . . I read 'the rate of profit is determined both by the organic composition of capital and by the rate of exploi-' . . . Knock at the door . . . '*The Times* photographer is here to see you.' I meet Jed who looks the most un-Murdoch-like person you could ever hope for. We talk about Dublin and being educated by the 'Brothers' (not a trade union school — a Catholic group of fellows who were quite keen on using bits of wood on young boys' bodies). . . more screams from the theatre and I'm on.

They have told me that I'm 'in the round'. This means I've got children to the front of me, children to the back of me etc etc. This involves me doing facials in a kind of mad, rotating action. I recount having clothes-fights with my brother and I head for one corner and come tearing back as I act out my brother drenching me with a Squeezy bottle full of dirty washing-up water. I get some children up to act out being robots while I do 'here comes the robot/Bzz Bzz bleep/it's sitting in front of the telly/and fallen fast asleep'. I do the hamburger that ran away; this one's called 'Fast Food' (Harry is the only one who laughs at that gag). After about an hour of running round and round in circles, it's over. I tell myself that I've given the children a variety of language-experience, some of it rooted in real speech, some in word-play, some in rhythm. There are some questions about when, where, why did it all start and I tell the story of how, when I was at school, we didn't used to have poetry, we had spelling instead. There was the word SEPULCHRE — I was always sure it was pronounced SEPULL-KREE. And then they gave us dictionaries. And we looked through them to see if we could find the rude words. But they weren't there. None of them. Mind you, it was Nelson's *First Dictionary* . . .

Afterwards it's autograph and book-buying time. Any writer knows

NEWBURY Spring FESTIVAL

London Symphony Orchestra
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
London Mozart Players
Chilingirian String Quartet
Nash Ensemble
John Lill : Paul Tortelier : Maria de la Pau : Jack Brymer: Martin Hughes : Harry Blech
The Dolmetsch Consort : Mary O'Hara : The King's Singers : The Chieftains
The Merchant of Venice at The Watermill Theatre
Films : Exhibitions : Dance

9-20 MAY

Booking Office: The Granary, The Wharf, Newbury, Berkshire. Tel: 0635 49919

LUDLOW FESTIVAL

22 June-8 July 1984
Silver Jubilee Year
Shakespeare's
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
& 350th Anniversary of Milton's Masque COMUS
— both performed in the Castle grounds.

OTHER EVENTS: Brass Band Concert — Orchestral Concerts — Film Festival. Making Crime Pay, a talk by P.D. James. The History of Ludlow through its Buildings talk — Light Music Concert presenting songs from "My Fair Lady", "The Raising of the Mary Rose". Margaret Rule, Jules Calmet and des Jeunes Jazz (traditional). Children's Theatre incudes two performances by Johnny Ball. When the Balloon went down Under. Craft Market and Art Exhibition. Something for everyone at

LUDLOW FESTIVAL.

Brochure & Bookings: **Festival Box Office, Castle Square, Ludlow (0584) 2150.**

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Open Air Theatre

20 JUNE TO 8 JULY 1984
'MEASURE for MEASURE'
'SHE STOOPS to CONQUER'
'The YEOMEN of the GUARD'
Folk Dancing · Victorian Music Hall

Details from Box Office POLESDEN LACEY
DORKING SURREY RH5 6BD
(Bookham 57223 or 52863)

THE NATIONAL TRUST

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30th International Folklore Festival
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Full Details from:
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Tel Sidmouth (03955) 5134
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3rd HEREFORD FESTIVAL OF BRITISH MUSIC
8-15 September
Full details from:
Festival Co-ordinator, Nell Gwynne Theatre, Edgar St., Hereford. Tel. 0432 275678

York Festival & Mystery Plays
8th June - 2nd July 1984
The magnificent York Cycle of Mystery Plays, staged in the magnificent setting of the ruins of St. Mary's Abbey in the centre of York, with a cast of 300, will provide the focal point of this, one of England's largest Festivals. There will also be a wide programme of events to suit all ages and tastes to include music, drama, arts, sports and entertainments of all kinds. The huge programme is detailed in the brochure which can be obtained by sending a large SAE to:
York Festival Office, 1 Museum Street, York YO1 2DT.
Telephone (0904) 26421.

38th STROUD FESTIVAL
International Poetry Competition
Sponsored by South West Arts.
A ballade from 8-100 lines.
Three prizes amounting to £600.
Closing date 30th June, 1984.
For details send S.A.E to
D. L. Worsfield, Esq., Shepherds Hoe, Rodborough Common, Stroud, Glos. GL5 5BN.

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PERTH FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS
May 16 - 27 1984
pfa
Full programme details available from the Round House, Perth. Tel. (0738) 22900.

20th-28th July 1984
Full details from:
The General Secretary,
Cleveland Inter-TIE, P.O. Box 41,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS1 2HE.
CLEVELAND INTER-TIE
CLEVELAND'S INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

'84 Words & Music
9th - 23rd MAY
London Mozart Players
Martino Tirimo
John Clegg
Benny Green
Acker Bilk
Further details from the Information Officer, St. Edmundsbury Borough Council, Thingoe House, Northgate Street, Bury St. Edmunds. Tel: 0284 63233.

Thornbury Arts Festival
3rd-13th MAY
Festival '84 performances include:-
The Westminster Piano Trio
Melissa Phelps, Cello
Harvey and The Wallbangers
The Yetties
The National Theatre – Kings & Queens
The Ballet Co. – formally the Genée Ballet
Shem the Penman – Patrick Scully
Arms and the Man by
The New Bristol Theatre Co.
Plus a full programme of lunchtime concerts and exhibitions.
Festival diary and further information from:
Words and Music, 7 St. Mary's Centre, Thornbury, nr. Bristol, Avon.
Tel: 0454-417386.
Thornbury Arts Festival is supported by South West Arts.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
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August 10th-
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The world's largest cultural event, now in its 38th year.
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Edinburgh EH1 1QS
031 226 5257
Full programme out mid-June
Booking from July 2 (postal)

the awful, sagging disappointment that comes at the end of a do like this if you find that no one's bothered to lay on stocks of your books. But they've done me proud here, thanks to the Lamp Bookshop. The impeccable organiser, Mick North, hands me my cheque, I didn't have time to say goodbye to Harry and I'm back to Lancaster station.

There I meet two young women who've travelled from Nuneaton in order to come for an interview for a job to get themselves off the dole. They missed the interview because of cutbacks on local buses and neither the dole office or the employers will pay the 50 quid return fare. I get stuck into more of Bob Sutcliffe: 'The capitalists search for a way out'. . . On to Geoffrey Bell's *Troublesome Business: The Labour Party and the Irish Question* (Pluto). I reach Euston fuming over Clynes, and Henderson and Herbert Morrison.

Home 11pm, £75 better off minus the cost of Michelene Wandor's *Gardens of Eden* (Journeyman) for S. and *Planet Earth* (Sheffield Women and Education Group) for Joe and *I'm Taggerty Toad* by Peter Pavey (Puffin) for Eddie.

As I go to bed, I think about why is it that it's 'liberal and humane' organisers of Events who hire me, but socialist organisers of Events don't? Socialist occasions are mostly childless . . . zzz . . . 4am. Eddie climbs into bed loaded down with nightmares . . . maybe socialists are childless? . . . zzz . . . □

Literary Festivals '84

This small sample from among the many festivals going on round the country all year is of some which will be concentrating wholly or primarily on literature. Further details may be found in the Arts Council's guide (see below).

Cheltenham Festival of Literature 14-21 October
Cley Little Festival of Poetry 16 and 18 May
Essex Festival at Colchester 1-12 May
Ilkley Literature Festival 9-16 June
Newcastle Festival last week in October
Oxford Poetry Festival 24-28 October
Stratford-upon-Avon Poetry Festival Sundays 8 July-2 September

FESTIVALS IN GREAT BRITAIN
– a comprehensive guide, price £2, is available from:
The Arts Council
105 Piccadilly
London W1V 0AU

15-20 JUNE 1984
ST MAGNUS FESTIVAL
ORKNEY ISLANDS
Artistic Director:
Peter Maxwell Davies
Prospectus: SAE to Eleanor Laird, 22 St Catherine's Place, Kirkwall, Orkney

10th MANANAN International FESTIVAL of MUSIC and the ARTS
27 June – 8 July 1984
Artists include:
* The Lindsay String Quartet *
*Sequeira Costa * Brian Kay *
*Keith Nichols * Bess Finney *
Full programme details and booking form from:
Festival Office, Port Erin, Isle of Man.

5th DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY ARTS FESTIVAL
25 May - 3 June 1984
Music · Theatre · Opera · Dance
Jazz · Folk Weekend · Poetry
Street Events · Exhibitions
Children's Events
Dame Janet Baker,
Georgie Fame, Boys of the Lough, Michala Petri
Peter Manning
Full information from:
Festival Office, Gracefield Arts Centre
28 Edinburgh Road, Dumfries DG1 1JR
Tel 0387 63822 ext 69

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Olga Semenova

In sadness

1917: The Russian Revolution and the Origins of Present-Day Communism
LEONARD SCHAPIRO *Temple Smith* £12.95

Camera Press

'Disciplined fanatics . . . ruthlessly manipulating public opinion'? Molotov, Stalin and Lenin at the start of it all, working on *Pravda* in 1917

Leonard Schapiro was exceptionally well-qualified to write a book on 1917. A leading academic authority on the Bolsheviks (Professor at the LSE, author of *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* etc.), he witnessed the Russian revolution as well. Schapiro completed *1917* in 1983, just before he died. His book is the distillation of a lifetime's teaching and reflection on the Russian revolution. It is both a concise and lucid narrative and a highly-charged piece of political analysis.

As narrative, *1917* fills a surprising gap in the literature on the subject. There are a large number of detailed studies of different aspects of the revolution, some of them brilliant works of scholarship. But no simple, comprehensive account of the two revolutions and the civil war exists. Schapiro's book is brief, but covers all the main points with absolute clarity. It also incorporates the conclusions of the most important recent research on the subject. The reader gets both an excellent introduction to the Russian revolution and an idea of how new material is causing thinking about it to change.

The value of Schapiro's analysis is more questionable. Schapiro was old and rigid, an adherent of the cold war/totalitarianism school. His interpretation of the Russian revolution is crude and unashamedly biased. He hates the Bolsheviks. He looks at the Russian revolution purely from the point of view of political power.

Schapiro's thesis goes roughly as follows. After the disintegration of the monarchy in February 1917, there was general support in the country for a broad-based socialist coalition. This quickly came to mean support for the Soviets, rather than for the Provisional Government. However, support for the Soviets did not mean support for the Bolsheviks, but for the 'traditional ideals of Russian socialism', represented by the SRs and, especially, the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks were a small band of disciplined fanatics. They were able to seize power in October because no one organised to stop them. They held on to it by annihilating their opponents, ruthlessly manipulating public opinion and militarising the economy. Right up to 1924, they were 'a largely unpopular party'. The first choice of a majority of the population would have been 'some form of moderate socialism'.

While it is undoubtedly true that the Bolsheviks were unscrupulous in their choice of methods and that they were not supported by a majority of the population when they seized power, Schapiro's thesis is prejudiced, one-sided and out-dated.

Schapiro's hostility to Leninism (which he sees as the precursor of Stalinism) leads him to maintain a position on the Bolsheviks which has been shown to be wrong. He presents them as an autocratically run and conspiratorial organisation, staffed by a group of men whose opinions were (with rare exceptions) uniform. Recent research, however, including that of Rabinowitch (whom Schapiro himself quotes), has shown that the Bolshevik party was not a homogeneous body, but a collection of committees. Each of these tended to run its own affairs independently and take initiatives of its own, regardless of the opinions and instruction of the Central Committee.

Other problems with Schapiro's work stem from the fact that he was an old-fashioned political historian. *1917* is based on the premise that it is possible to understand the Russian revolution purely in terms of political power, without reference to social or economic questions.

This, firstly, leads Schapiro into errors of interpretation. He concentrates exclusively on the mechanics of the Bolshevik seizure of power. This approach allows him to avoid discussing the appeal which the Bolsheviks' programme held for industrial workers and peasants. He seriously underestimates the degree of popular support which the Bolsheviks enjoyed: the strong power base which, by October, they had in the cities; and the enthusiasm generated by their land policy in the countryside, which was probably the crucial factor in their victory in the civil war.

Secondly, Schapiro's purely political orientation affects his choice of period. He picks the dates 1917-1924 because they delimit the transfer of political power. But, for any real understanding the Russian revolution, one needs to go both further back and further forward. 1917 is not the right point at which to start. The events of that year make sense only if viewed in the context of the rapid industrialisation of Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. 1924 is not a good place at which to stop, because the most dramatic changes resulting from the Bolshevik takeover — the social and economic transformation of Russia undertaken by Stalin — didn't happen until 1928-1933. Schapiro doesn't consider these events part of the Russian revolution. Most younger historians, however, would argue that they were and that a revolution should be defined as the period of upheaval, social and economic as well as political, which intervenes between the fall of an old regime and the firm consolidation of a new one. This is the approach taken by Sheila Fitzpatrick, in her recent appraisal of the Russian revolution, a work which forms an interesting contrast to Schapiro's.

Schapiro's enduring advantage over more modern historians, however, is that he lived in Petrograd as a boy (from 1917-1920). This has

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helped him to bring what is essentially just a well written textbook to life. He has managed to breathe into it something of the feel of the time — the euphoria, excitement and suffering of revolutionary Russia. □

RUSSIA — 2
Godfrey Hodgson

In anger

The Reality of Communism
ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV *Gollancz* £12.95

Alexander Zinoviev has seen the future, and it does not work. His perception of the Soviet Union is bleak. It differs from that of Soviet apologists in its utter rejection of all the claims they make on its behalf; at the same time he differs from most Soviet dissidents and their Western disciples in that he insists that this unjust, incompetent and immoral society is nevertheless formidably stable and powerful, and indeed is destined, 'short of world catastrophe', to universal hegemony.

To Zinoviev, Soviet life is grey and ridden with hypocrisy and toadying, Soviet society scandalously corrupt and unequal, the Soviet leadership cynically self-interested, Soviet policy bent on world domination for no better reason than the mere convenience of the Soviet élite. He brushes aside as ideologically naive those who imagine that the Soviet Union will one day evolve into something that the West will find more congenial.

He is explicitly contemptuous of the optimism both of the Western Right, which hopes that Communism will collapse, and of the Western Left, which hopes that it will evolve into some acceptably democratic form of socialism. What he means by Communism, he explains, is the opposite of what Communists outside the Soviet Union would like to think it is. And he is even more caustic with the non-Communist Western Left.

'Let me remark *en passant*,' he sneers, 'for the edification of every kind of Left-wing movement in the Western countries that is attracted by Communist ideas, that they will be the very first people to be destroyed in the event of a Communist society being installed in their countries, for they contradict the very essence of Communism.'

Alexander Zinoviev served in the Soviet air force as a pilot during the Great Patriotic War and then studied philosophy at Moscow University, and taught philosophy both there and elsewhere. He was expelled as a dissident in 1978 and now lives in Munich. This book, written in Russian in 1981, is his tenth.

Its style is unfamiliar. It is written in more than a hundred short sections, some obviously developing naturally out of their predecessors, others contrasting sharply, like a film cut. These short sections, some exceedingly pithy and epigrammatic, are organised into six sections, dealing with the nature of Communism; the possibility of shaping a philosophical method for analysing Communism both as theory and as society; what Zinoviev calls 'communality', a concept which requires both definition and analysis; the moral consequences of Communist philosophy; the locus and character of power in the Soviet system; the meaning and function of ideology; and the future prospects of Soviet and other varieties of Communism.

This would be a difficult book at the best of times, and it is not made easier by the style of the translation, which lurches awkwardly between technical philosophical jargon, slang and an archly uncomfortable pseudo-slang, exemplified by the repeated use of the word 'eyewash', which, if it conveys anything, was, I suppose, the Edwardian slang for what we would now call 'bullshit'. Still, sympathy is due to the translator, since this was obviously an extremely difficult text to render.

One of Zinoviev's key ideas is what he calls 'communality'. The word as he uses it has echoes of both 'commune' and 'Communism'. But on the surface it means no more than 'the way people behave in communities'. Zinoviev presents this social behaviour as almost wholly unsavoury. Soviet society, as he describes it, is rampant communality: bullying, toadying, sucking-up, the angry words are repeated like a chorus again and again through his text. Yet it is possible to suspect that in this, as perhaps in other respects, Soviet society is less different from what is to be found elsewhere than Zinoviev thinks. Certainly the unscrupulous struggles for self-advancement he describes in the Soviet workplace sound all too like life in a British newspaper or television company.

> Each individual who wants to get a tastier or more generous helping at life's banquet must convince those surrounding him that, as bastards go, he is average, run-of-the-mill and of only moderate talent.

This suggests that the author may have been capable of being quite a bastard himself.

His manner is scathing. Why do the workers in a Communist society almost always prefer their lot? he asks, and replies that the answer lies in the 'coefficient of remuneration': they may receive less reward, but they work so much less that the coefficient is higher than in the West. 'Of course they dream of good food, clothes, flats and cars,' he says. 'But they would scarcely be prepared to pay the price for them that Western workers pay' — that is, work.

He concedes that Soviet society is appallingly unequal, with the *nomenklatura* living a life of hereditary privilege. He concedes the tendency to create a class of convicts who are near to slavery, and he says that public opinion in the Soviet Union operates only downward, to impose the authorities' views on the dissenter, not to impose dissent on the authorities. But what is worst, he says, is the greyness of Soviet life, 'enveloped in official bravura — even the lying, which is meant to brighten life up, is grey'.

Yet Communist society, he argues, is stable. Because of its homogeneity, its standardisation, centralisation, because of ideology and control, more than because of repression, because of its passive stoicism and patience, Soviet society can survive injustices and deprivations that would tear other societies in pieces.

The same totalitarian character that gives the society its passive strength, Zinoviev believes, endows it with an inescapable drive to expand. This tendency towards hegemony results from the very nature of Soviet society, he says: the leadership tries to behave towards other countries as it behaves towards its own. Communism is irreversible, Zinoviev concludes. So what does the future hold? One possibility is the physical destruction of the Communist regime, most probably (he implies) in wars between different Communist societies, leading most likely to a society of a similar kind, but with 'even crueller regimes'.

That is one possibility. The only alternative will be 'the struggle for the blessings of civilization on the basis of Communism itself'. This will require 'time and sacrifices'. But that is what civilisation always demands. This is a prophet of the Old Testament, not a preacher of new Jerusalems. Communism, he says, is not the end of the human suffering, but the beginning of a new cycle of history — just as terrible as those which he believes it will ultimately destroy. □

FICTION
Richard Deveson

Scrabble

Solitudes
GOFFREDO PARISE *Dent* £8.95
In the Future Perfect
WALTER ABISH *Faber* £2.50
Jelly Roll Morton's Last Night at the Jungle Inn
SAMUEL CHARTERS *Marion Boyars* £7.95
Paradise for Hire
JUSTIN WINTLE *Secker & Warburg* £8.95

'One very hot day in 1944...', 'One August afternoon in the mountains...', 'One August day in 1968...' — the 32 very short stories in Goffredo Parise's *Solitudes* all open with a minimal, prosaic ringing of change on a minimal, prosaic opening. Similarly, the characters tend to start out as 'a man', 'a woman', 'a girl', and to continue not to achieve proper-namehood. And the stories are arranged alphabetically by their titles, single, mainly abstract nouns that start with 'Felicità' and get as far as 'Solitudine' (an earlier collection, not translated into English, began the whole sequence with 'Amore', reaching 'Famiglia'). Presumably, these and other deliberately schematic contrivances have an expressive point, but what?

Taken separately, the stories can seem slight, not to say elusive. 'A middle-aged woman', who is lonely and unhappy, goes to stay with friends, meets a few new people, somehow appeals to them, begins to feel a bit better. But who and what she is, why she's been unhappy, why she attracts the others, why she begins to recover: none of this is explained. 'A youngish man and woman' visit 'a poet', old and ill, who shows them the sunburned arm of a teenage boy in a magazine advertisement, and points to where

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the boy's wrist is lighter from wearing a watch: 'for some reason, it seemed to the young guest and the girl to be life, the beauty of life.' Yes...

It is when the collection is taken as a whole that it perhaps begins to speak. And here may be the reason for the formulae, the perfunctory, matter-of-fact tone. Parise seems to wish to express a feeling of remoteness, with the mildest dash of melancholy or sense of futility thrown in. The sheer accumulation of similarly-treated episodes intensifies the contrast between what is variable among the episodes (momentary moods, shifts of light, idiosyncrasies of personnel, mere contingent detritus) and what is constant: a view of the human condition seen telescoped, as from a height, the sounds of life muffled, the colours muted. In this way, the two extremes can both come into their own: the poignant chance details as well as the view *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Perhaps this is over-subtle. Those more attached to human detritus will feel that, although there are all sorts of quite different people and situations here, too many of the stories are, well, just rather dull. The prospect of vol. 3, S to Z, won't be universally exciting.

There are alphabetical devices again in Walter Abish's collection **In the Future Perfect**, but, this time, of a New York *avant-garde* variety. In one piece, each paragraph is preceded by an italicised alphabetical list of the words appearing in it; in another, the 26 sections are headed with three words beginning with A, B, C, etc., and these words are then footnoted wherever else they are used. In addition, paragraphs are unindented and separated by white space; sentences are short, with few subordinate clauses; there is an epigraph from John Ashbery. One concludes, wearily, that this is all meant to reveal to us that literature is created, my *God*!, out of *words*, out of *language* — as if, for the past few thousand years, we'd all been living under the delusion that it was made out of toenail clippings marinated in Coca-Cola.

On the other hand, like an old recidivist, story keeps on breaking in. One piece, a sort of trial run for Abish's novel *How German Is It*, is a reasonably straightforward study of the relation between present and past (here, contemporary Germany and the concentration camps). Like other pieces, it involves mysterious disappearances and a contrast between a kind of bloodless perfection and an inexplicable disorder, a contrast elsewhere expressed in recurrent images of luxurious Manhattan high-rise apartments, shop-window displays and artistic photography, and black leather, sexual violence and death. This collection was published in America in 1975 and hindsight makes much of it look experimental in the conventional (i.e. non-laudatory) sense — a group of first shots which Abish has since gone beyond. It is not so easy not to tell stories.

Jelly Roll Morton's Last Night at the Jungle Inn is a story, unassuming and enjoyable. The ageing jazz pianist, fallen into poverty and obscurity, holds a nameless listener with his skinny hand and glittering eye, and tells him all about his life — the authorised, public version, but also an undocumented private version that Samuel Charters, a jazz historian, has constructed with what seems to be fair plausibility.

If me Bangkok bar girl, then me no rike Mister Justin Wintle book **Paladise for Hire**. Me not mind him make bar girls talk this way, maybe that way them talk. Me not mind last ten pages book all litten that way. But me think Mister Wintle book mostly stories about English man do bumsing with girls Bangkok, me think that soft porn, me think that big drag. Me not want Blent Council ban Mister Wintle book, book not lacist. Me not agree Festival of Right, me not say book deplave or collupt. But me not think leaders *New Statesman* want bother lead about English man do hardly nothing except bumsing with Bangkok bar girls all day wrong, all night wrong. Light? □

BIOGRAPHY
Rupert Christiansen

Fame's cost

The True Adventures of John Steinbeck Writer
JACKSON J. BENSON *Heinemann* £28

When John Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1962, the *New York Times* deplored the philistinism implicit in such a selection. It was already fashionable to sneer at the author of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and by now he seems to have passed altogether beyond the realms of serious critical attention. His contemporary and rival Hemingway has maintained a patina of academic respectability, but Steinbeck himself has long since been stripped naked by such makers of opinion as Edmund Wilson and Alfred Kazin (who found him embarrassingly naive) or those who disapprove on principle of writers who get dinner at the White House and make the Book-of-the-Month Club every time.

Jackson J. Benson's biography is, as the price indicates, an enormous book. Detailed and comprehensively researched, it works very well in its conventional way. Ultimately it confirms most of the ordinary conceptions of Steinbeck as a sentimental tough-guy, but it also touches on deeper ironies attendant on literary success in America.

Steinbeck was not a self-important man or a self-conscious writer. He relied literally and directly on what he observed for inspiration, and, as Benson emphasises, his books are almost completely unrevealing of his background or emotional history. Born in the Salinas valley of California in 1902, he lacked in childhood the anguished complications that are meant to nurture a writer's sensibility. He loafed comfortably enough through Stanford, then took a variety of labouring and ranch-hand jobs. He thrived on his relative poverty during the first years of the Depression because he enjoyed all the little improvisations it entailed; it also kept him close to what he wanted to write about.

As a novelist Steinbeck was neither programmatic nor experimental. His approach was naturalistic, but he never, for instance, manipulated his material as Dos Passos did in *USA*, nor did he suffer from the titanic preten-

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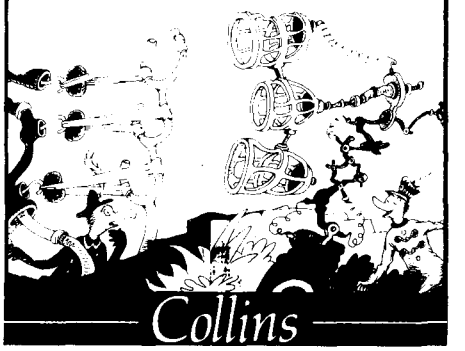

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sions of a Dreiser. Much of his early fiction, such as *Pastures of Heaven*, was a straightforward and indignant response to blatant iniquity. As one might expect, it was only with the more whimsical and softer-edged novellas of the mid-1930s that he found an audience. *Tortilla Flat* and *Of Mice and Men* make friendly, harmless rogues out of Mexican *paisanos* and hobos untainted by trade unionism. Had he not encountered Tom Collins, who worked heroically for a New Deal Resettlement agency, he might have continued in this patronising vein. But Collins introduced him to the astonishingly unpublicised plight of the Dust Bowl migrants — the press was in league with the big farmers' interests to keep it quiet — and Steinbeck went to help in a camp designed by Collins to accommodate some of the thousands of desperate smallholders who had flocked into the promised land of California from drought-ravaged states like Oklahoma, only to be exploited and hounded out again.

From this experience Steinbeck wrote *The Grapes of Wrath*, another simple and indignant book, based on what he saw rather than any profound analysis of it, but with the strength of its simplicity and indignation. Its effect was sensational, comparable to that of *Oliver Twist* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Steinbeck was branded a communist, which he certainly wasn't, and the Farmers' Association planned to reply with *Plums of Plenty*, but the essential reality of his picture had to be acknowledged.

What followed is familiar in the history of American letters. Steinbeck won a celebrity which broke his temper, nerve and first marriage: fame cut him off from the worlds of experience he understood and was happy with. He spent the rest of his life attempting to salvage his integrity. His first gesture of defiance was to take off on an expedition to the Gulf of California led by his closest friend Ed Ricketts, a marine biologist who was investigating the ecology of tidepools. Benson claims, as others have done, that Ricketts's environmentalism influenced Steinbeck's fictional methods, but this is not altogether convincing: what is clear is that he envied Ricketts's rambling and untrammelled lifestyle, which he commemorated in *Cannery Row*, his misjudged effort to repeat the success of *Tortilla Flat*.

In the early 1940s Steinbeck abandoned California for the corruptions of New York and spent time in Europe as a war correspondent. He remarried, divorced and married again, developing tastes for Savile Row suits and Broadway razzamatazz. Simultaneously, his writing lost any centre or direction. Two projects proved particularly bitter. One was *East of Eden*, a large 'family' novel on Thomas Wolfe lines. He staked his self-respect on its success, telling a friend 'if it is not good, I have fooled myself all the time', but he was not vindicated by its reception. The second was his dream of modernising Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, one of his favourite books. The dream dissolved despite an idyllic period working on it in a retreat overlooking Glastonbury Tor — he simply lacked the necessary command over an alien language and idiom.

Meanwhile his reputation as the author of *The Grapes of Wrath* and a good American solidified. He found himself Yeats's 'sixty-year-old smiling public man', plastered with awards and travelling for the PEN Club. Jackie Kennedy wanted him to write JFK's biography, an offer he wearily refused. His last major writing assignment, a year or so before his death in 1968, was in Vietnam, where his old faculties of observation forced him to renounce his initial support for Johnsonian policies.

Steinbeck clung hard to the vestiges of his best self, avoiding the blatant *volte face* performed by so many of his colleagues of the Thirties, but becoming steadily more morose and withdrawn as his life shrivelled up. His biographer's affection for him is obvious, and one can catch Benson straining hard to redeem the last largely wasted 25 years.

On the whole this book evinces some of Steinbeck's own finer qualities of directness and sympathy, although in the course of 1,000-odd pages, there are bound to be some longueurs and lapses of tastes (for instance no one ought to refer to what I presume was an attack of diarrhoea as an 'urgent bathroom problem'). When Ed Ricketts first saw the thinly disguised picture of himself in *Cannery Row*, his comment was 'It is written in kindness. Such a thing cannot be bad'; and one can imagine Steinbeck accepting this biography with much the same deserved tribute. □

MAGAZINES
David Berry

Stylistics

THERE WAS a TV advertisement not long ago extolling the virtues of IPC's leading women's magazines. It showed a busy woman dropping into her local newsagent for something quick and easy to read. 'Thank heaven', ran the jingle, 'for magazines.'

I can't say I was inspired to rush out and buy the latest issue of *Woman* or *Woman's Realm*, but IPC caught quite neatly the attraction of magazines: new ideas and enthusiasms in a convenient, cheap form and a chance to relax for a while in dilettantish reading without the concentration necessary for a book. The disappointment with most radical magazines is that while they bristle with the former, they pay only lip service to the latter.

Take the first issue of *International Labour Reports* which aims to provide 'unique coverage of international labour movement news'. It's a skilful blend of news stories mainly collected from union publications across the world and factual features on multinational companies and union resistance. Yet there is little of the off-beat or the personal and at times I felt I was taking a dose of international union medicine as an antidote to the capitalistic world press. Worthy, certainly, but hardly engaging.

A similar earnestness pervades another new magazine, *Third World Book Review*. Over 30 books are given an extended treatment by mainly academic contributors most of whom manage the difficult balance between literary journalism and committed scholarship. Yet, at £2.75, the *Review* will have to offer more than this to move beyond a specialist audience. Missing are the shorter, irreverent items which make commercial magazines such appealing products.

Two periodicals just as specialist as these but which do reach out to a wider readership are *Shoptalk* and *in from the cold*, and it seems no coincidence that they have a greater proportion of women on their editorial collectives. Launched last year, *Shoptalk* provides a fascinating glimpse into life behind the counter in London's West End stores. Did you know that Liberty's pay staff only £80 per week or that Peter Robinson started as an outfitter of funeral clothes? All is revealed in Issue 2. *In from the cold* is a 'liberation magazine for people with disabilities' but it's also much more. Issue 7 contains a discussion of reproductive rights which rescues the emotive issue of the foetus with potential disabilities from the anti-abortionist's slogans. As Micheline Mason writes: 'With the advent of screening, the pressure on mothers to get rid of us "before we can cause any trouble" has become a blatant example of society's attitude towards us'.

Both these magazines work because they mix theory and experience, politics and emotion and have a style of their own and a sense of urgency. *Emergency* is a new magazine of general radical politics which also achieves this. The first issue includes discussions of sado-masochism, the film *Gandhi* — a treatment far superior to *Third World Book Review*'s — and a critique of the 'Britishness' implicit in much CND writing. Peter Ayrton writes:

> When I'm active in the peace movement, I try to remember to hide my comintern marxist-leninist upbringing. I smile more than usual, go with the flow. . . but sooner or later a remark slips out a shade too bitter. . . and then the truth is out — here is an unreformed 'friend' who believes in class and the realities of class conflict.

This is stylish magazine writing, as entertaining as *Woman* yet serious and radical. But *Emergency* can't be found in local newsagents. Like the other magazines, it's available only in radical bookshops or on subscription. □

This is the first of a new quarterly column looking at new magazines and/or recent pamphlets.

Michael O'Neill

Back home: the boiler room

The new boiler croons contentedly,
Dialled interloper no-one likes.
Its oil-gorged forbear growled through talks
At midnight, part of the family.

But now my childhood is the dust
Beneath dynastic bikes, bust chairs.
Slowly an aura disappears.
Chipped tiles image the fracturing past.

I can still see my mother kneeling,
Scrubbing this floor when we first came.
Compute the years: we are their sum.
The boiler sings, recalling nothing.

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Pressure Groups and Government in Great Britain

GEOFFREY ALDERMAN *Longman* £3.75

In the strict and particular fundamentalist chapels of the labour movement it is still fashionable to deride 'single issue campaigns' but behind the organ lofts of the Broad Church there is an increasingly audible whispering about the need for the Labour Party to transform itself into a campaigning body. In recent years a number of pressure group people have filed quietly into Parliament. If Geoffrey Alderman is right in saying that 'a great many people now believe that causes are better pursued through pressure groups than through political parties' then the Campaigning Tendency has not a moment to lose.

This compact and readable study of the role of pressure groups traces their history from the 18th and 19th centuries 'interests' to the groups we know today — or don't know, for one of the themes to emerge from the book is the covert nature of so much pressure-group activity. The majority of citizens who cast their votes at election times are probably unaware of the extraordinary power and influence of the interests which operate in Westminster and Whitehall. Many of these are bolted tightly into the machinery of government itself: British agricultural policy, for example, is fashioned as much by the National Farmers' Union as the Ministry of Agriculture. The high profile, radical pressure groups are small fry when compared with the BMA, the Law Society, the Building Societies Association, or such less well known bodies as the Home Grown Cereals Authority.

Alderman does not find any grounds for regretting this state of affairs although he has one or two minor worries. It is anomalous, for instance, to clap in irons local councillors found guilty of improper influence or corruption while the Maudlings go scot free because of the immunity from prosecution of MPs. He would also like to see a register of professional lobbyists and 'parliamentary consultants' with more force than the current voluntary one.

Pressure groups are essential in making Government better informed, in raising minority interest and speaking for those issues — homosexual law reform and abortion — which the political parties find difficulty in handling. So long as they can manage to avoid what the late Bob McKenzie called 'pluralist stagnation' — the log jam of conflicting interests — they can only enhance the quality and responsiveness of Government — provided, that is, we know who they are and who is controlling them.

Nicholas Murray

The Zofingia Lectures

C. J. JUNG *Routledge* £11.95

In one sense this book is an accumulation of juvenilia the publication of which might have embarrassed Jung, but in another it is a valuable contribution to the historical record. We have for the first time a definitive account of the lectures he gave at the Zofigiaverein, the student fraternity club which he joined in 1895. Debates were forthright and Jung's blunt language comes through without any of the qualifications which characterised his later work.

The seeds of so many of his mature attitudes are apparent: his capacity for explosive argument, his preoccupation with the problem of evil, his peculiar form of theological agnosticism, and his conviction that, transcendental though the soul might be, it had to be approached scientifically. The soul? Nowadays it is an intangible concept which raises little more than a smile among hard scientists.

As a young man, Jung's approach to a subject destined to become all-important in his life — extra sensory perception — lacked intellectual rigour and he too easily concluded that repeated reports of psychic phenomena provided absolute evidence of their validity. We have seen today a similar explosion of testimony about flying saucers without adding any reliable evidence of their existence. Clinging to a desire for immortality, people swallow any shred of evidence in favour of the spiritual, and poltergeists, ghosts and materialisations all re-affirm the craved potential. Scepticism was not Jung's strong suit when he set out to investigate the paranormal but his thesis did try to answer a fundamental question. Were psychic powers rationally explicable as special psychological states or were they powers of a different order? Temperamentally predisposed to believe in the psychic though he was, bland belief was qualified by elaborate psychological exploration. The behaviour of peripatetic tables so often apt to wander in seances, for instance, could be explained by normal as well as abnormal means through the use of unconscious *motor* impulses.

There is a good deal of confused thinking in this volume, tricked out in youthful rhetoric, but as a record of the man he was to become the volume has its place in Jungian history.

Vincent Brome

William Shakespeare's King Lear illustrated by Ian Pollock

Oval Projects/Sidgwick & Jackson £6.95

Cartoon Shakespeare had to come. This version of *King Lear* is certainly topical: Gloucester's bastard son looks like Grace Jones, and the jester is a punk. Ian Pollock incorporates the complete text into his illustrations and creates a nice balance of word and image, with figures looming outwards and constantly changing scale in a very unstagelike way. The colours suggest the mood of different scenes, reaching a crescendo of darkness in the storm then panning out to the acid greens of madness and the crimson of despair. Such a familiar cartoon format brings a new sharpness to Shakespeare's language, especially for a young audience at a time when the links between word and image are changing fast.

What jars is the overwhelming sense of one-dimensional action. Personalities and ideas seem too bulky for the format, and are reduced to caricatured expressions and monotonous posturing. The momentum of the comic strip is to consume and move on, not return and reflect. Dramatic space is lost, and the audience cannot be roused to bring its own experience to the action. *Lear* offers some ideal scenes to the cartoonist (as when Gloucester has his eyes gouged out), though it is ironic that a play whose themes are blindness and understanding receives such visual treatment. As Gloucester says: 'I have no way and therefore want no eyes: I stumbled when I saw'. But Shakespeare survives the challenge, and anything that widens the audience for his plays should be welcomed.

Clare Rendell

Small Wars You May Have Missed

ANDREW GRAHAM-YOOLL *Junction Books* £5.95

The Manure War (1879-1883), or more accurately, the fertiliser war, was fought between Chile, Bolivia and Peru over the nitrate mines of the Atacama. *The Times* informed its readers that 'whether poor or prosperous, solvent or bankrupt these states think it necessary for their dignity to keep up the show of military and naval power... The possession of weapons is a public danger among excitable people, and South American republics are too prompt in appealing to arms on the slightest provocation.' Despite the xenophobic tone, this was, and is, a convincing assessment of Latin American nationalism. But it is only part of the reason why Latin America has had more than its fair share of small wars. As Andrew Graham-Yooll makes clear, it was European, more especially British, investment that was at the heart of so many of the 'slight provocations' that led to years of unnecessary war.

In the Victorian age the British preferred to rely on diplomacy to protect their South American interests. Occasionally a gun boat would be despatched, but never a task force, and more often than not it was enough to remind the belligerents of the extent of their indebtedness to the British public through Barings or Hullett Bros. Take the first war between the Andean states in 1836-1839. One of the slight provocations that led Chile to invade Peru was the latter's default on a Chilean loan. Chile had lent the money to Peru to help service its own debt to Britain of £1 million. Peru, for its part, needed the Chilean loan as it was also heavily in debt to British banks. By the outbreak of the manure war of 1879 Peru owed £50 million, most of it to British investors. *The Times* sided with Chile which owed a mere £13 million and whose British-funded mining interests were under threat.

Graham-Yooll's book is a well-researched, succinct and readable account of the misty events which have helped to create the confusion that is modern Latin America. With the United States and the International Monetary Fund doing their best who needs Great Britain and Baring Bros? Except perhaps the Falklands Islands Company.

Nigel Cross

CHATTO FICTION

Angels

BY

DENIS JOHNSON

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John Le Carré

'. . . a captivating blend of dry wit, sharp focus and unstinted compassion . . . precise, touching, haunting.'

The Observer

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ROCK
Barney Hoskyns

Turning full circle?

Flavour of the month — the 'mewlish voices and vacuous rhubarb lyrics' of the Thompson Twins

FEARS THAT clean, cosy, comfortable pop music is here to stay have seized the beleaguered hearts of serious music punters throughout the land. Pop's cycle has turned again, transporting us back into a teenybop heaven circa 1973. The only difference is that the added promotional artillery of video may mean it will never go away. All that's happened really, in fact, is that British pop has become a global music. The second invasion of America, led by the Human League and Soft Cell and backed up by Culture Club, Duran Duran and the Eurythmics, has expanded pop's references but also homogenised them. Five years ago the cultural language of British pop meant, among other things, the street jargon of punk. Today its lingo is the international sign-language of video.

Every English pop group now makes records for the global video market, though few use the opportunity to jumble codes of style and sexuality as Boy George has done. Pop lyrics have to adapt quickly to the demands of the image, and video imagery is rarely anything more than a series of snapshots from a fantasy lifestyle. What is creepy about the new pop groups is the way they seem to take it in turns. Their success always reeks of some happy coalition of radio/TV and record company interests. As I write, it's the turn of the Thompson Twins; by the time the column appears it might be anyone.

The Thompson Twins are the pure displacement of sound by visuals, modern-day kiddieshow presenters who dress up in goofy hats in order to make money. With mewlish voices and vacuous rhubarb lyrics set to insipid synthetic funk, their operation is so insincere it makes one feel quite queasy. Not for nothing is their repellent record called *Into the Gap*.

City Limits recently described the potential divide between teenage viddipop and quality product as 'the credibility gap', but, of course, there need be no absolute opposition between 'pop' and 'rock'. Even *rock* groups like Echo & The Bunnymen are 'pop' groups now. I've revelled in such recent bestsellers as Madness's melancholy 'Michael Caine' (Stiff), Cyndi Lauper's gloriously tacky 'Girls Just Want To Have Fun' (Portrait), Van Halen's nouveau Who 'Jump' (Warner Bros.), and schmaltzmeister Lionel Richie's spine-tingling 'Hello' (Motown). Madness have also made their best album in the confident and eclectic *Keep Moving*.

The people for whom the credibility gap has become troublesome are, of course, the old youth leaders Joe Strummer and Paul Weller. Lost in the wasteland of video pop, these most public of social consciences have taken, respectively, high and low-profile routes back to credibility. Where Strummer's returned with his guitars blazing like guns, rabble-rousing us to follow him into another new rock dawn, Weller has retreated into the nostalgic shadows of Sixties r'n'b, fashioning, with his keyboard player Mick Talbot, a sedate consecration to a twilight world of Parisian jazzophiles called *Café Bleu* (Polydor). While seeing no reason that he should have to keep singing Jam street anthems, I find this period music stylised and impersonal. If I wanted to hear Ramsey Lewis or Jimmy Smith or Booker T. & The MGs, I guess I'd listen to them.

It's tempting to see every musical change as a reaction, but one needs no dialectics to see that there are diversions from pop's clothes-horse parade less noisy than Joe Strummer's or that the ordinary blokes next door, alias the Smiths and Howard Jones, don't care for dressing up. Jones's sudden and enormous popularity — his album *Human's Lib* (WEA) entered the chart straight at No. 1 — suggests that the day of the teen idol may be over. He is as perfectly plain as his name, and all the songs on his album say that that's all right, that you don't have to be hip and cool to be happy.

The Smiths on *The Smiths* (Rough Trade) say the same thing more artfully, and are visually as neutral, but they're also anti-synthesiser, rephrasing the stock cadences of desire against the simplest acoustic-electric backdrops. Nice Mr Jones, in contrast, is an electronic one-man band, a local hero made good who sings yearningly and unaffectedly about the moral crises of our lives and humanises the machines others use to alienate. Which is fine, of course — and he writes better tunes than faceless choirboys like China Crisis — but, in the end, *Human's Lib* suffocates in its reasonableness. 'Sometimes I'd like to go to bed with a hundred women or men', he insists, but then of course we all would sometimes.

As solo males go, Jones is preferable to anodyne pretty boys like Nik Kershaw, an American-style new-waver who still streaks his perm and turns up the lapels on his jacket. His MCA album *Human Racing* (more humanism!) is the work of a jackdaw, a futurist singer-songwriter who'll mould anything into his blandly programmed wallpaper style. Like Howard Jones, he makes music for young adults who feel left out of club culture, without the personable charm of Jones's moralising.

More respectable ways of not being mere pop — of being credible album artistes — while simultaneously amassing hordes of money include making neo-progressive dance rock, as the once irresistible Simple Minds did on their bombastic, wastefully overproduced *Sparkle in the Rain* (Virgin). No more pompous as Pomp Rock goes are official centurions of the Progressive Revival, Marillion. Progressive Rock is the revolt of grammar schoolboys who've had enough of street slogans and for whom issues like nuclear war furnish a good excuse for a bit of poetic heavy metal. *Fugazi* (EMI) is a surprisingly strong LP, all long pieces bulging with baroque synth fanfaronades, but singer Fish's apocalyptic paranoia is too often directed exclusively at the *haute bourgeoisie*, narrowing the focus of the intelligence his literary pretensions secrete. Marillion's music is a poor boy's Genesis, but the earnest, messianic Fish — Gerard Depardieu as a tragic CND jester — is an intriguing figure, certainly more so than the stolid figure old Pomp princ(ess) Freddie Mercury cuts on Queen's *The Works* (EMI) — despite the amusing autocritique of 'Radio Ga Ga'.

Best recent albums are:

Climate of Hunter
SCOTT WALKER (Virgin)
NME's Richard Cook argues there is no precedent for this music, and I'm inclined to agree. The musical landscapes over which this most graceful of baritones glides are so desolately lonely, you wonder if the man frequents human society at all. Aside from echoes of John Martyn and even Joan Armatrading, the elegant pain of this music is like nothing on earth.

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The Poet 2
BOBBY WOMACK (Beverly Glen, import)
There's some fabulous soul music about but soul's crown must again be placed on the majestic brow of the great Bobby Womack, who has returned with another sumptuous collection of ballads and a more than adequate sequel to the first *Poet*. The tautological 'Love Has Finally Come At Last' must already stand as one of the three or four greatest duets in soul music. The good news is Womack has finally signed a proper deal with MCA, who may pick up the album for domestic release here.

Making History
LINTON KWESI-JOHNSON *(Island)*
On to a real poet. I've always found Johnson too dour and sour as a 'black voice', so I'm glad I can recommend this purely as a piece of music. The arrangements and playing of Dennis Bovell's Dub Band here are as spiritedly crafty as anything by Jerry Dammers, making Johnson's prognostications on events such as the Brixton riots and the New Cross massacre come alive with a real power. 'It is no mystery, we're making history...' □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Try God

JESUS, THE EVIDENCE (C4) — a contradiction in terms as it turns out — may seem a rather ungracious thing to put on in the week of its subject's supposed death. But debunking exercises like this are articles of faith to Christians, confirming them in their belief. The more irrefutable the evidence, the more they like it, the more convinced they become that they are in the right game, that there is something here worth fighting over and, hopefully, dying for. This is Christianity's trump card, its Catch 22, that all evidence to the contrary, TV programmes and alien cultures alike, the work of the devil.

Much of the said evidence, or lack of it, is familiar by now: the fact that the story of Jesus's birth and early life was derived from various prophetic books in the Old Testament; the acceptance of the Gospels as works of theology and propaganda rather than contemporary news-sheets; the theory that the miracles were myths which grew up among the early Christians as ways of affirming their man's divinity. More interesting are the alternative interpretations put forward by people like Morton Smith. Asked to encapsulate his life's work in easy-to-understand sentences for television, he said that there is evidence in the commanding tones of Jesus's reported speech and the awe of his subjects' response to suggest that the miracles were performed through hypnosis. Smith believed that the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth was being offered by Jesus 'here and now', through secret nocturnal ceremonies which were, in fact, hypnotically induced hallucinations.

According to other sources, the story of Jesus's later life is also fabricated and the only thing we can be sure about is his baptism, his role as teacher and a list of sayings recently dug up at Oxirincus. A scholar called Schmidt has shown that if you lift out the rather colourless narrative elements — 'And then he came to another place' etc. — you are left with just this list of sayings which the gospel-writers seem to have threaded on to a fictional narrative, often erroneous in its detail.

One way these early pamphleteers sought to cover themselves against accusations of fabrication by people like Schmidt was by surrounding their made-up miracles with a decorous secrecy, so that what we take for a godlike modesty on Jesus's part — 'Go now and tell no one of what you have seen' and the like — turns out to be early evidence-rigging by people with political reasons for wanting the new Messiah (David was the first, of course) to turn up sooner rather than later. Messianic movements often follow periods of colonial oppression and John the Baptist's execution by a Roman puppet had fuelled the fires of Messianic expectation.

At this point in the programme it looked as though Ken Russell had been called in to offer a few tips on the cinematic demolition of sacred cows. A small blue plaster statue of Jesus was blown up in slow motion and the pieces frozen in mid-air. During the ensuing commercial break we learnt of the existence of 'Star Wars, The Biscuit', a product which seemed to be offering its own subtle comment on the surrounding programme.

In the face of some of the revelations in *Jesus, the Evidence,* Christian thought long ago seized on the only option left open to it, that offered by the theologian Bultmann who reasoned that historical evidence was unimportant compared with the spiritual truth it embodied. This is fine, but it carries no more weight than the opinion that liquorice is good stuff because we like it, particularly when the speaker happens to market the stuff for a living. The fact is, we are products of a liquorice society and therefore ill-equipped to say what a good thing it is.

I have always felt, without knowing why, that Jesus was an implausible sort of character, more of a political advertising campaign than a man, so I was interested to hear one of the most rational-sounding contributors to the programme, Prof. Wells of Sussex University, suggest that Jesus never existed at all, that 'God Saves' (his name) was almost certainly a figment of Paul's imagination, in much the same way that the Ovaltinis were a creation of Fry's Chocolate. No doubt a Bultmann devotee would counter by saying that this doesn't mean the Ovaltinis aren't totally real to thousands of children throughout the world, and I would go along with that, particularly after reading the story of 'The Jesus Egg That Wept' on the front page of the *Sun* last week.

Jeffrey Hunter, in **King of Kings** (BBC-2) is probably the best most gods can hope for in the way of a flesh-and-blood son. There he is for all to see, a walking talking hunk of loveable humanity. His undisputed status as the only true incarnation of Jesus seems to have tempted Robert Powell down the same path for his portrayal of Christ in Zeffirelli's inferior **Jesus of Nazareth** (ITV). Powell is generally credited with bringing to the part of Christ the insight that He never blinked during His lifetime. This was, in fact, only Powell's attempt to reproduce the famous stare-to-camera Hunter used to out-face his scriptwriter, and not, as has been suggested, Powell's inability to act and blink at the same time. □

THEATRE
Paul Allen

True love

Camille
PAM GEMS *The Other Place, Stratford*
The Merchant of Venice
SHAKESPEARE *Stratford*
Last Summer in Chulimsk
ALEXANDER VAMPILOV *Birmingham Rep Studio*

The first night audience fell on **Camille** like a starving man on a parcel from Oxfam. It answered a hunger that has been nursed so long and so repressively we hardly knew it was there: when did we last see romantic love treated with sympathy and clear-eyed intelligence in a contemporary play? Or the passionate pursuit of happiness, in the form in which most people still actually pursue it, represented without scorn or hostility?

The story is that told by Dumas in *La Dame aux Camellias* and adapted for *La Traviata*, but it has been toughened. Watery sentimentality has been boiled away, and Pam Gems never allows us to lose sight of the utterly commercial context of the relationship between Armand Duval and Marguerite Gautier. The play opens with the auction, after her death, of the possessions ('my things, my lovely things') which have given her life its tangible centre. It reaches its fulcrum when she says to him, 'The day you pay for me I am a dead woman.' And it tips into tragedy when both parts of that prophecy come simultaneously true.

Armand and Marguerite are doomed because they will not settle for a transactional relationship in a society which believes only in what it has paid for. One of the deftest things about the play is the touchingly comic sub-plot involving a fellow prostitute who genuinely falls for an entrepreneurial Swedish count and is rewarded with marriage; the irony is not just that greater freedoms are possible on the frontiers of the known world, as Sweden seems to be from Paris, but that she is the only person who doesn't see him as a wealthy bore. The importance of the central relationship, and one of the reasons why *Camille* is tragic without being depressing, is that Armand and Marguerite discover that a wholly romantic relationship — by which I mean one rooted in love and not power — may not be possible for them but must still be striven for.

They fail because Marguerite cannot drop the practical thought that one more rich customer could assure their future (or that of her son); or because Armand's sexual pride won't let him

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accept that practicality. The writing in *Camille* isn't spectacular on the page, but it contains a sustained emotional intensity which we can take, usually, only in grand opera, melodrama or the detached high comedy of *Private Lives*.

What it demands in a straight play is absolute truth, and absolute truth is what it gets from Frances Barber and Nicholas Farrell. He combines a louche, Byronic plainness of looks and manner with the fierce courage of a crusader and the blindness of one who doesn't know there are other routes to happiness. But the play belongs to Frances Barber in Ron Daniels's excellent première production.

This is partly because, for the first time, the story rings with a woman's voice, from the trivia (like the remark from Polly James's superior madame that 'flesh will only get you so far, after that it's bones') to the heroine's dying call not of her lover's but her child's name. And it's partly because Ms Barber makes it her own. The greatness is not merely in the private/public beauty of a paid-for-woman, or the frightening realism with which she coughs up her tubercular lungs, or the exultant giggle she and her lover share in sex; it's the absolute conviction, blown about as she is by argument, threat and desire, she brings to changing her mind and embracing her own future.

Beautifully designed (by Maria Bjornson) and confidently staged, *Camille* launches a new play policy at the Other Place which has given a mood of excitement to the RSC in Stratford which cannot be seriously undermined by reactions to John Caird's production of **The Merchant of Venice** in the main theatre. Much of the criticism has been levelled at Ultz's designs; it seemed to me that the red and gold and black canopies suggested pretty effectively a commercial city which did most of its lucrative business with the East. But the costumes are frankly silly: Bassanio and his chums look like the back row of a dancing chorus got up as kitsch toreadors; the school parties titter at their cod-pieces.

What the actors do scarcely compels attention either, with the exception in the major roles only of Ian McDiarmid's Shylock and Frances Tomelty's Portia. His mannerisms of speech, so annoying in *Henry V* where he is the Chorus, are harnessed to a purpose in a Shylock who is cleverer than his Christian adversaries but outgunned by their power. Portia is passionate, perhaps full of hidden depths, but her court-room coup is a last-minute inspiration of unconvincing intellectual stature. Caird has made it a dull play, reinforcing what we had suspected, that these Venetian merchants were a dull — if malevolent — crowd.

Last Summer in Chulimsk is apparently regularly revived in Russia where it certainly cannot offend anyone much. It is a gentle satire on a small group of people in a remote village; it tells of 24 hours in the life surrounding a forest café, in which guns are produced, marriages proposed, children banished and . . . and everything stays much the same.

The play is strong on texture rather than plot, Bill Pryde's production contains meticulous rather than exciting characterisation from a rather glamorous cast by studio standards and there's a splendidly detailed set by Geoffrey Scott. Paul Thompson's English version seems serviceable, but I kept thinking we were meant to be laughing more often than we did. I suppose it is the equivalent of 'they all look alike to me' to be discouraged by the tendency of so many Russian playwrights to seem like Chekhov to a British audience. But I bet the manageress of the café sometimes dreams of going to Moscow. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Ramblers

Life is a Bed of Roses (PG)
Chelsea Cinema
Loose Connections (PG)
Screen on the Hill; Classics, Haymarket and Chelsea
The Golden Seal (PG)
ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue; Classic, Haymarket; etc.
Footloose (PG)
Plaza

Just before World War I, the hugely rich Count Forbek (Ruggero Raimondi) assembles a crowd of top-hatted and furred friends and well-wishers in a dark, snow-patched part of the Forest of Ardennes — Arden? — where he persuades the lovely Livia (Fanny Ardant), whom he adores but who has just descended from a car in which she has been swooningly kissing another man, to unveil an al fresco table-top model of a giant folly, a *'Temple de Bonheur'* he intends to build. In their statue-like groupings the crowd evoke vague memories of *Last Year at Marienbad,* only this elegant mob is disconcertingly given to musically orchestrated 'oohs' and 'aahs' and, from here on in, we must prepare ourselves for little arias, refrains and snatches of recitative, scored by Philippe-Gérard and reminiscent of that arch Demy-*monde* of *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* and *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. Then, to the accompaniment of sounds of bombardment, the rattle of machine-guns, the fantastic model redly blazes, filling the screen. War comes, to leave the count with a depleted fortune, his architectural olio of a Utopian city reduced to a turreted and tricked-out château, in itself a sort of anthology of bad taste down the ages. At which point there are successive visual skips, one to a stagey medieval king with a spear through him handing over a baby to an old crone, the next to a coachload of kids leaving the present-day château, now become a 'progressive' school, the Institution Holberg, where a very mixed group of pedagogues and social scientists is assembling for a seminar on 'The Education of the Imagination'. Alain Resnais' worst and most wilful film to date, **Life is a Bed of Roses,** is under way.

Its French title, *'La Vie est un Roman'*, apparently sets out to contradict the Napoleonic dictum that life is *not* a novel; but that will not get us much forrader. For Resnais — and his scriptwriter Jean Grualt, who worked on the nearly as awful *My American Uncle* but also has three fine Truffaut films to his credit — have between them produced (the invitation is too open to be resisted) a fictional folly that comfortably outdoes the megalomaniac structure mocked up for Count Forbek. The piece shifts, without even the sense of that kind of logic we discern in dreams, from mad Forbek finagling some war-weary guests into donning gold robes and downing green potions in order that they may be reborn to tiny scraps of mucky-looking sword-and-sorcery comic-strip stuff *à la* Prince Valiant to much longer cavortings at that contemporary seminar. What's more, or less, it moves back and forth among these three distinct 'stories' and styles at the drop of an eyelid, without any ironies of juxtaposition detectable from where I slumped, as if Resnais were engaged on an exploration so private as to be downright perverse.

One is aware, of course, that the director is a fan of strip-cartoons and Harry Dickson, that the stern-faced Raimondi's operatic Chinoiserie scenes with his puppet-guests owe something to Franju and Feuillade (a debt hardly repaid), and that an effort of some sort is being made both to satirise the conflicting notions of adults regarding the nurture of the young and to body forth the manner of imaginative hocus-pocus that really grabs the child-mind. But how heavy-handed it mostly is, in no way alleviated by the choric chanting of such abstractions as *'Amour!'* and *'Bonheur!'* or of the more down-to-earth oath *'Salauds!'*. Whether Resnais has a sense of humour continues to remain a mystery. Passing through this ungainly charade are two or three actors who deserve better. Vittorio Gassman's no-nonsense architect has a gleam in his eye as he asks of the count's updated folly, *'Est-ce que c'est comestible?'*, which threatens to reflect on the entire enterprise; Fanny Ardant, in a vestigial role, is Fanny Ardant; and, as the pretty mouse of a country schoolteacher, Elisabeth, Sabine Azéma is quite superb. Had more been made of her function, sanative as well as charming, we might have had a more coherent film.

Loose Connections, directed by Richard Eyre of *The Ploughman's Lunch,* produced by enterprising Simon Perry of *Another Time, Another Place,* and written by Maggie Brooks, a National Film School graduate, is about half bad, the half of what is essentially a two-hander that belongs to Lindsay Duncan as Sally, a po-faced, middle-class feminist who has built a car with some women-chums and advertises for a co-driver to get her to a libbers' convention in Munich. Somehow she gets the stickier lines, while the *soi-disant* 'gay', working-class, country-cassette-playing fellow, Harry (Stephen Rea), who answers her ad proves bumbling, mendacious, funny and altogether more 'life-like' as they make their bickering, chequered way through Germany. But, thank God, this is no 'road-movie' in the one-damn-thing-after-another Wenders fashion: it has a twist, is sequential, shows — yes — promise. **The Golden Seal** is ecology made palatable. With a spunky boy in the Aleutians shaming assorted hunters of the fabled beast, even dad. **Footloose** is an utterly cynical concoction, a Bible-belt *Flashdance* without flash, about as rebellious as picking your nose in the loo. □

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FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

Gut reaction

WHAT WE eat and how we eat it are subjects capable of rousing fiery passions — not least among the enlightened middle classes, whose heads are abuzz with cautionary information about fibre and artificial sweeteners, whose household goddess is Elizabeth David and who can be spotted at the check-out counters of supermarkets staring censoriously into the trollies of less discerning shoppers, brimming over as they are with cardboard-tasting chocolate gateaux and fizzy drinks in puce and silver tins.

Although I enjoy peering into other people's shopping baskets as much as the next man, I don't feel as vexed as I should about cholesterol or roughage; but I do become very emotional on the subject of offal, particularly those succulent varieties, like brains or tripe, which cause the ever-expanding army of the dainty and the genteel to screw up their faces in expressions of heavily mimed disgust. About these delicious, nutritional and — alas — increasingly unobtainable foods I feel the kind of protective rage more often expended on a threatened country house or hedgerow; in vain, it seems, for — as a sorrowing spokesman for the meat trade explained to me — 'the housewife of today is not conversant with these meats' and is becoming less so with every day that passes.

Part of the problem is one of generations: younger people, especially in the more opulent South, are less adventurous and more squeamish than their elders. What my informant referred to as the 'major' offals — liver, kidneys, sweetbreads even — are thought respectable, and sales have held up over the past 20 years, with lambs' and calves' liver favoured in the refined South, pigs' liver in the Midlands and the delicious if pungent ox liver in the robust, old-fashioned North. 'Peripheral' offals, like tripe and brains, have fallen wretchedly from grace, however: they are thought 'not nice', messy to handle, unpleasing to the eye and of dubious provenance. In the South in particular, young people no longer want to try them out, and spurn the habits and the recipes of their more discerning elders.

But the decline of offal is not simply a matter of its not looking 'nice' on a butcher's tray, or of changing tastes. More and more people buy their meat in supermarkets, many of which are unequipped or unwilling to stock and prepare the less familiar types of offal and prefer to deal in pre-wrapped chops and steaks; in an age of convenience foods and working wives, people have neither the time nor the inclination to convert a pig's head into brawn or skin a bowlful of lambs' tongues. Nor are the peripheral offals cost-effective as far as the meat trade is concerned. Labour is no longer as cheap as it was; dressing tripe is a labour-intensive business and tripe dressers are harder to come by than they were when George Orwell took his tentative mouthfuls *en route* for Wigan Pier.

'During and for some years after the war,' the admirable Constance Spry has written, the word 'offal' was 'used more appreciatively than was once the case'. 'In fact, esteem for the butcher was for a time in direct ratio to the amount of offal he could provide.' As Christopher Driver has pointed out, the national diet improved no end in the 1940s, despite shortages and rationing. Maybe my longing for offal conceals a dubious nostalgia for childhood in post-war Britain, but a world in which sweetbreads in white sauce or egg-and-breadcrumbed brains are elbowed out by pot noodles and chickens that taste of fish is, in that small respect at least, a sorrier place. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2818 **Set by Mercy Dash**

We've done it before, but we're going to do it again — ask, that is, for 'famous first words'. To give you the idea, a couple of examples from 1968: Harold Wilson — 'I knew there was light at the end of the tunnel.' Oedipus — 'I'll be back.' As many as you like, by 3 May.

No 2815 **Set by Ms de Meaner**

Potted biogs of invented contemporary poets plus samples of their work.

Report **By Len the Unlucky**

I can't go on like this. First it was hours of overtime disentangling the Complex mail item by item from mounds of remarkably similar stuff intended for the actual Poetry Picking Pagoda. Then all-night sessions agonisingly trying to be fair to a huge field of good runners — Coward, I must admit, would have been proud of you. Eight quid apiece to Mr T. Griffiths for whom, alas, no room and to those printed, plus a copy each of Coward's *Withered Nosegay*, generously donated by Methuen. Hon. menshes, non-remunerative, to Terry Towling, Margaret Rogers, Jimmie Pearse, Basil Ransome-Davies and Hazel Stanley for horribly plausible bards of the Right, to George Moor for the only Alliance poetaster, to Gerry Hamill for getting sex into everything and to Joan van Poznack, D.A. Prince ('Rita Cook is, in her own words, "a woman".'), Gerard Benson and Peter Norman.

Ken Gruff was born in Manchester in 1948 and has worked as a builder's labourer, club bouncer, hire purchase snatch-back man and sheep shearer. He now teaches at Whaley Bridge College of Adult Education. The following is excerpted from his 100-sonnet sequence about the 19th-century radical cotton-worker, Joshua Heptinstall.

Tha'll smash their fancy speech, auld Josh.
Their pansy, plush and posh,
Flash speech, the way your mallet
Smashed their frames as 'twere a pallet
Made by Muckleigh folk. Tha's dead:
We'll think of thee, the lads; we're red
Still, Josh, and that's the way we
'll stay. No Southerner can equal thee!

NICHOLAS MURRAY

GHENGIS THE MILKMAN b. Kettering 1954 in back of early transit van; made name in Channel 4 Video-Box, subsequently booked to appear at venues all over the country. MA in Arabic; PhD in Metallurgy, both at Oxford. Adopted name from friend in Camden Town. Genghis has been described as 'the growth of the poetic fringe'.

'A mile down Chiswick highway'
A mile down Chiswick highway
The motors high-fly over
They foul the British by-way
And the big one's name is Rover
It tramples on the cat's eyes
And gives a leaden chunder
It only grows to that size
To push us people under

And when this dog's let out at night
It travels on the far, far right. WILL BELLENGER

Pennine born, Leeds University English graduate, Ned Stark, spent a solitary childhood roaming the bleak moorlands surrounding the farm where he lived with his widower father who only spoke at livestock auctions. He still lives there with the Swedish sculptress, Anna Svenson.

Wall.
Black rigid suture
scarring the sodden hill,
blunting the belligerent wind.
Millstone mosaic,
redolent of sinew
searching back through time,
from this software cage
to my stone age. R.J. PICKLES

X9 took up his chair in Comparative Semiotics after publishing his book 'Dialectics and the Sign as Post-Imperialist Discourse'. The poetry of X9 — itself a pseudonym based on a Saussurean joke — endeavours to invert structuralist expectations within the urban problematic.

The Letters 2 and 3
jet lag
press gag
high rise
street wise
down town
bring down
roof rack
quack quack EMILE ORCHANS

JEREMY MENTION — b. 1950. Educ Oxford, where nominated as next major poet and trained intensively to become allusive yet accessible, traditional yet post-modern, serious yet ludic, etc., etc. Has published several thin but elegant pamphlets of incisive verse, between visits to world trouble spots (Cambodia, Nicaragua, the National Theatre, etc.)

Flan Pong
While sunlight slopes between the sugar-palms to chequer
The broad face of Heng, retired dermatologist,
Whose grandfather had been astronomer to the Prince,
He warns me with smooth gravity against venturing
Into those cantonments west of the aquarium
Where pigs scavenge in the street. I thank him formally
As his thin lips part to ingest a crisp-fried locust
And a measure of local brandy. His fat cigar
Is a coprolite. And I'm now sure he'll end up shot.
They always seem to, once they've featured in my poems. GEORGE SIMMERS

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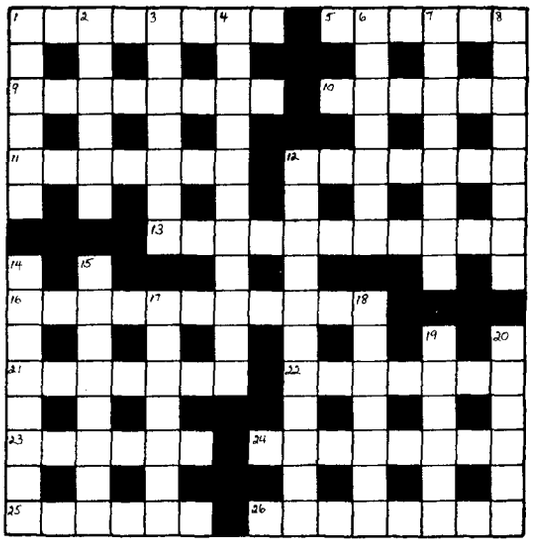
Weekend Crossword 1437

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1437, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 1 May.



ACROSS

1 Message about a case in Greek (8)
5 Observe a tool go up and down (6)
9 Inscription with little gravity in happier translation (8)
10 Differently routed so that it is a roundabout way (6)
11 Workplace in which to get to know about irritation (7)
12 A most attractive girl but she is surrounded by backward males (7)
13 Barbarians found in the silent ship I wreck (11)
16 Solicitous for a single prom to be arranged before preparing to play (11)
21 Spoil what could be a benefit at the seaside (7)
22 Part of plant hired out produces small tract (7)
23 Boy holds it back for a wash (6)
24 A study in oriental evil requires supporting material (8)
25 Ball which got Kerry out for about a duck (6)
26 Shrinks back when the person returns holding a little bit (8)

DOWN

1 Talks concluded by summits (6)
2 Pass in and watch it typed out (6)
3 Means of transport for one in scattered parish (7)
4 Paying to put a stop to it among those who were chaste (11)
6 Refined, having a gentle disposition (7)
7 In that way nothing is comforting (8)
8 Military uniform for woman in prison (8)
12 Means whereby alcohol might help the bricklayer (11)
14 Be apathetic about a doctrine in a depressing way (8)
15 Unusually poor rate for the worker (8)
17 Got up again as an organ in flower (7)
18 Make happy with news about an actor (7)
19 12ft 6in boxers' hold (6)
20 One of these animals is put into pies in the Midlands (6)

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THEOSOPHY: S.A.E. for free pamphlets, book list, Programme of activities. Sunday 22 April 8 pm Informal Q/A Meeting. 'The Bhagavad-Gita as Yoga'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

TIME TO SCRAP MONARCHY? Republic v. Monarchy discussion, 'REPUBLIC' AGM, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, WC1. Thursday 26 April, 6.30 p.m. Free. All welcome. 01-554 8848.

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A broad knowledge of local government functions, of the private sector, of employment and economic development initiatives; and with skills in organisation development, managing change and advisory and counselling activities aimed at individuals, groups, communities and organisations.

This is a re-advertisement; previous applicants need not re-apply.

Assistance with relocation expenses up to a maximum of £2,075 and temporary housing accommodation are available in approved cases.

Application form (returnable by 11 May 1984) and further details from Director of Personnel and Management Services, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG, or telephone (0533) 549922. Ext. 7084.

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

As part of the City Council's Equal Opportunity Policy applications are welcome from people regardless of marital status, sex, race or disability.

INQUEST

requires

WRITER

for book on London deaths in police custody, inquests and related issues. Nine month contract; salary **£9,345 pro rata.** Closing date **3 May,** interviews **12 May.**
For details 'phone 01-247 4759.

UNITED CAMPAIGNS FOR JUSTICE.

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

THERAPY

EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

BOOKS

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

LISTINGS

SAT 21 APRIL

STOCKPORT Easter Festival organised jointly by CND and Ecology Party, at Trades Union Centre. **Details: Annette Magner, 11 Ashley Rd, Offerton. 480 7688.**

HOLY LOCH, Dunoon. Scotland Easter Alert March. Assemble 11am Alexandra Parade, east of Cal-Mac Pier. Rally Blade Park 2.30pm. Spkr Mike Pentz. **Org Scottish CND 041-331 2878.**

EDZELL, Angus. March from US War Communications Base (cars to Edzell village for shuttle service to assembly point). Assemble 11.30am Edzell base. Rally 2.30pm Edzell Park. Spkr Bruce Kent. **Org Scottish CND, 420 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow. 041-331 2878.**

SUN 22 APRIL

SOUTHALL Friends of Blair Peach/GLC present Cabaret by Priory community theatre. 2pm St George's Church garden marquee, Lancaster Rd. **Details: 1 Hamilton Rd 01-843 0343 or Celia Peach 01-609 5925.**

MON 23 APRIL

SOUTHALL Friends of Blair Peach/GLC Procession starts at 2 pm from St George's Church Hall, Lancaster Rd. Mural and Plaque Ceremony at Orchard Ave. 4pm Rally at St George's Church Hall. **Details: 1 Hamilton Rd 01-843 0343 or Celia Peach 01-609 5925.**

TUES 24 APRIL

WIMBLEDON Two new plays by The Sub Culture Nuclear Free Zone Arts Theatre presented by Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition at Drake House, St George's Rd at 8pm.

WED 25 APRIL

LONDON East London Rally Against the Police Bill – 'Policing and the miners' strike'. Spkrs from Kent & Yorkshire NUM, Dan Jones, Secretary, Tower Hamlets Trades Council, A. Johal, IWA National Secretary, Roach Family Support Committee. 7.30pm, East Ham Town Hall, High Street South, E6. **Org. Newham & Tower Hamlets Council Police Committee & Hackney & Newham Campaigns Against the Police Bill. Details 01-555 8151.**

THURS 26 APRIL

DUDLEY 'Culture & the Left' discn. led by Richard Dyer. 7.30pm The Swan, Castle St. **Org. Marxism Today/CPGB.**

MON 26 MARCH

FRI 27 APRIL

MANCHESTER 'What's happening to local democracy?' Spkrs Bob Litherland MP plus local councillors. 8pm Withington Town Hall, Lapwing Lane, W. Didsbury, M20. **Org. Withington CLP.**

LONDON 'Creggan' – video on Derry Housing Estate and public meeting 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall, Acre La, SW2. **Org S. London Irish Solidarity Cttee.**

LONDON 'Middle Class Life, Politics & History' Conf. £10/£6 unwaged History Workshop Centre, 42 Queens Sq, WC1. **Details & registration: Brenda Corti, Centre for Social History, Univ. of Essex, Wivenhoe Pk, Colchester CO4 3SQ.**

EDINBURGH 2-day Community Information Fair. 10am-5pm St. John's Church Hall, West End Princes Street. **Details: 031-225 2612/031 556 0079.**

SWINDON 'Learning from experience in a Therapeutic Community', Lower Shaw Farm. Fee: £60 Assoc. of Therapeutic Communities membs/£65 non membs. **Details & application: Jeff Roberts 01-693 4014.**

SAT 28 APRIL

LEWISHAM 'Political Status for Irish PoWs – remember Bobby Sands, MP' street meeting 11-1pm Clock Tower, High St, SE13. **Org S. London Irish Solidarity Cttee.**

LONDON Caribbean Evening in aid of Sickle Cell Soc. 7-11pm The Greenhill Centre, High St. N. Manor Pk, E12. Tickets £3/£1.50 children from 478 5351, 555 5837, 472 8998, 534 0085.

MANCHESTER North-West NUJ Women's Conference – bringing women journalists together to campaign for a better deal. Spkrs from The Guardian, New Statesman etc. 10am Town Hall, Albert Sq. **Details: Saddleworth 70944.**

OXFORD Labour Campaign for Gay Rights national conf. at Ruskin College. All details of transport, registration £1, creche etc. from **LCGR office 01-286 9692.**

FORTHCOMING

30 APRIL LONDON 'Computers in University Teaching' Queen Mary College Computer Centre Open Day. 10-4pm Great Hall, Queen Mary Coll, Mile End Rd, E1 4NS. **Details: 01-980 4811 x 3211.**

30 APRIL LONDON Vietnam Victory Day Reception 6.30pm Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre, Morpeth Terr, SW1. Adm. free. **Tickets & Details: Mrs. Joan Yuille, Britain Vietnam Assoc, 52 St John's Park, SE3. 01-858 7930.**

2 MAY LONDON 'Racism and Policing' – 1st in a series 'Fighting Racism Today' Spkrs Unmesh Desai, Lee Bridges. 7pm Inst. of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Rd, N1 9NG. **Details: 01-837 0041.**

3 MAY LEWES The Peace Movement in Europe. Spkr. Mary Kaldor and European guest. 8pm Priory Lower School, nr. Grange Gdns. **Details: Kate/Martin for Lewes CND Lewes 77324.**

5 MAY MANCHESTER Launch of Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom in North West. 11am-1pm County Hall, Piccadilly Gdns. Spkrs incl Frank Allaun, Barbara Castle, Michael Meacher. **Details: Phil Turner, 28 Ellesmere Rd, M21. 061-428 6446.**

5 MAY BETHNAL GREEN One day workshop 10am-4pm at Library 'Get the Empty Houses used' – mounting a local campaign. Meeting will be addressed by local activists and leading London housing campaigners. Creche. Tickets £1/50p unwaged from **Ross Fraser/Mary Evans Empty Property Unit, HEO, 157 Waterloo Rd, SE1 8UU. 01-633 9377.**

12 MAY LONDON 'Beyond Poor Images' discn. and exhibition 10.30am-1pm City University, EC1. Tickets £2/£1 unwaged from **Child Poverty Action Grp. Alan Booth, 1 Macklin St, WC2 01-242 3225.**

12-13 MAY SHEFFIELD National Women's Peace Weekend. **Details: send s.a.e. to: Sheffield Peace Shop, 51 Leopold St, S1 2GY.**

14 MAY GLASGOW Housing the Frail Elderly conf. Walton Conference suite, Southern General Hospital. **Details: Melina McGarry, Age Concern Scotland, 33 Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DN. 031-225 5000/1.**

16 MAY EWELL. Non-violent Direct Action Workshop. 8pm Bourne Hall, Ewell, Surrey. **Details: Epsom & Ewell CND Epsom 21348/24055.**

19 MAY LONDON Trade Unions in early Victorian Britain: Conference in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Adm. free Congress House, Great Russell Street. **Details: Dr. David Englander for Soc. for the Study of Labour History, Arts Faculty, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.**

19 MAY LONDON 'The Workings of Whitehall' seminar arranged by Royal Inst. of Public Administration for the '300 Group'. Chelsea College, Manresa Rd, SW3. Fees £20 membs/£25 others. **Details: Jane Matthews, RIPA, 3 Birdcage Walk, SW1H 9JJ. 01-222 2248.**

24 MAY LEDBURY Bruce Kent will speak at St. Katherines Hall, 7.15pm Adm. Free. **Org. Ledbury CND.**

27-29 JULY NOTTINGHAM Shelter Annual Housing Conference University of Nottingham. **Details: Tim Mars, Shelter, 157 Waterloo Rd, SE1 8FX. 01-633 9377.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252 Olivier (open stage) 'Saint Joan', 'Guys and Dolls'. Lyttleton (proscenium stage) 'Venice Preserv'd', the award winning 'Master Harold and the Boys' — ends 2 May. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'Animal Farm', 'Strider — the story of a Horse'. Building closed Good Friday. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE Gordon Street, WC1. S & CC. 01-387 9629. Until 26 April 8pm 'Godspell'.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY 01-628 8795/638 8891. 24hr info 628 2295.
BARBICAN THEATRE MEASURE FOR MEASURE seats available to 28 April "enthralling" *Guardian*
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS from 2 May "Great panache . . . raised the audience to peals of enthusiasm." *Financial Times*
JULIUS CAESAR from 23 May
"Peter McEnery and Emrys James are at their finest" *Sunday Telegraph*

Poetry

OUTPOSTS POETRY QUARTERLY. Poems invited for future issues and 1984 Poetry Competition (prizes £1,000). For details send S.A.E. to 72 Burwood Road, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 4AL.

Entertainment

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE, EC1. 01-278 8916 (5 lines). CC group sales 01-930 6123 Until 22 April **Nanjo-Okumura Noh Company** from Japan eves 7.30 — a selection of Noh and Kyogen (comic plays). 24 April-5 May **The Hungarian State Puppet Theatre** — The Firebird/Classical Symphony/Petrushka and The Miraculous Mandarin eves 7.30, Mats 25 & 28 April & 5 May at 2.30 pm.

Galleries

PENTONVILLE GALLERY 47 Lambs Conduit Street, London WC1 01-242 8629. **Bomb Disposal** — photographic exhibition by Ed Barber documenting the growth of Peace Camps throughout the UK over the last four years. Tues-Fri 11am-6.30pm, Sats 11am-2pm. GLC funded, financially assisted by GLAA.

Exhibition

EXHIBITION
George Orwell
1903-1950
Orwell manuscripts and memorabilia selected from the largest collection of Orwell papers will be on view for the first time.
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Flaxman Gallery, University College, Entrance from Malet Place, Torrington Place, WC1

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ATTRACTIVE BI-FEMALE, 29, graduate, would love to share warm friendship, good times, cuddles with intelligent, caring, feminine Bi/Gay lady, 26+. London based, non-smoker, interested theatre, cinema, sport, travel, talking and laughter. Box 8101.

ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE. Warm, romantic, *lively-minded divorcee,* (prof. 40s), *yearns* to cherish — reciprocal permanent relationship — genuine, mature, educated, personable, successful prof. man with charm & integrity. London/Home counties. Box 8104.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL man, creative, imaginative, warm-hearted, seeks woman, young to 36, any race, slim/medium, sensual, who needs the older man. London/surrounding areas preferred. Box 8105.

BORED PROFESSIONAL man, 34, no ties, wants to meet interesting, intelligent woman, *for company in and out of bed.* Birmingham/West Midlands. Age irrelevant. Box 8098.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate *introductions lead to pleasant friendships,* spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (NT), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DAVE, YOUNG 39, attractive, shy, sensitive, isolated, inexperienced, seeks kind, understanding woman (penfriend initially?). Interests: jazz, reggae, reading, gardening, socialism, self-development. Hampshire. Box 8102.

DIVORCED DAD, aged 46, with custody of two lovely boys (8 & 9), *is College Lecturer,* home-loving, sincere, has lovely home in Ireland, seeks genuine, warm person, any nationality. Box 8046.

DIVORCED MOTHER, FORTY-FIVE
now living hundred miles north of London, seeks male friend and lover. She is a teacher, artist, gardener, Jewish. Lonely for male company.
Box 8115

DRAWING DOWN THE MOON! Friendly girl graduate will introduce you to the kind of person you are looking for! Call personally 38 Mount Pleasant, WC1 weekdays from 6 p.m. Anytime Saturday/Sunday. 01-833 3924.

EARTHY, EXCITING, intellectual woman sought for lasting relationship, by male university teacher (40s, divorced), romantic, sensual, socialist, stylish, sympathetic, London. Box 8116.

EDINBURGH WOMAN, with growing awareness of being attracted to own sex, apprehensive of plunging into gay scene, wants to meet other bisexual women for discussion, *support, possibly friendship.* Box 8108.

EDUCATED, TALL Asian, 44, seeks correspondence with single ladies. Marriage possible. Asian and Oriental welcomed. All letters answered. Box 8100.

ELIGIBLE MALE, academic, tall, single, 33, likes tennis, music, mysteries, politics, conversation, exercise. Seeks accomplished and attractive female companion. Cambridge. Box 8111.

FEMALE LIVERPUDLIAN Law student, 21, slim, 5ft 8ins, seeks casual friendship with fun-loving male, 20-30. Interests: music, politics, travelling. Box 8096.

FEMALE LOVER, 33, of music, literature, cinema, theatre, travel and socialism, seeks an attractive, intelligent, witty male to share it all with. (London-based). Box 7999.

FEMALE, 26, balancing independence and companionship, seeks more of latter from male, 30s, moderately interesting, intellectual and *into fitness, eating out, eating in, wherever.* London based. Box 8109.

FEMALE WHOSE life has narrowed to only work, seeks male correspondent 30+, to *counteract female dominated work, for exchange of ideas, widen horizons, education,* mutual support, friendship and encouragement to increase interests in every direction. Box 8042.

FEMALE, YOUNG 45, practising Christian, seeks honest, caring man to share her life. Own home in need of T.L.C. as is the writer. Simple interests, aiming distance NORTH DEVON. Box 8073.

INTELLIGENT, DOWN TO EARTH,
loyal woman, early forties, seeks gentleman. Interests: cooking, restoring old houses, conversation and relaxed informality.
Box 8107

IS THERE I wonder in or about London a relaxed, independent woman who, maybe like myself at 49 is bogged economically in grey, defunct non-warring marriage, and though resigned to the situation, would chance a quest for adding a little sparkle to life? Box 8124.

LECTURER, EARLY 30s, divorced, seeks lasting relationship, with intelligent, warm-hearted lady, in South Wales/Bristol area. Interests: music, politics, chess, reading, travelling. Box 8095.

LEFT-WING CAMPAIGNER, with varied cultural pursuits and affectionate, seeks like-minded woman, about same age, to share times ahead. Box 8021.

LITERARY MALE would enjoy a stroll in the park or a visit to the National Gallery with a sensitive, artistic, 40s female. Box 8103.

LIVELY, LEFT, lovely, intelligent female, (Londoner), seeks caring, extrovert, non-smoking partner (35-50?) to share food, wine, eclectic interests, and 'love happily ever after'. Box 8120.

M. & F. JEWISH Introduction Agency, Highgate, for friendship/marriage. Executive and Professional. Tel. 01-340 5616, or write Box 8078.

MELBOURNE ACADEMIC, 48, male, separated, seeks friendship in Melbourne with companionable, compatible woman, under 165 cms. My interests include: reading, music, conversation, camping, tennis. Box 8045.

PROFESSIONAL MALE *graduate,* 46, divorced, interested mainly in the arts and social sciences, seeks intelligent, attractive and sincere female. 30s, 40s, for lasting relationship. Midlands or London. Box 8099.

POLITICS UNDERGRADUATE, 35, separated, considered attractive, seeks warm, educated, humorous female, 20s/30s for stimulating conversation, laughter, most of all companionship. North or Midlands. Box 8123.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 5ft 8ins, div., going to live in Med., seeks attractive, intelligent, sensual woman, 35-40, any race, free to live anywhere. Box 8110.

RESCUE REQUIRED for lovely female, single parent, by intelligent, attractive, warm man, 30+, for fun, culture, loving relationship, since she's currently confined to W. Sussex. Box 8121.

SLIGHTLY USED divorced lecturer, early 50s, in excrutiating vortex, seeks help from warm, sympathetic, open ended female. Equal opportunities apply, all areas considered. Offers: Box 8070.

SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC, approaching 30, tall, slim, solitary, ardent, iconoclast, loves beauty (music, art, ideas), seeks attractive, exceptionally intelligent girl (sensitive, passionate and lonely) to share ideas, humour and life. West Midlands/London. Box 8114.

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU (Heather Jenner), 124 New Bond St, W1. 01-629 9634. Consult us for individual attention.

THIS GREYING Academic (with City interests), *seeks close and discreet friendship with like-minded, educated lady,* living London. Box 8097.

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WARM, ATTRACTIVE graduate woman teacher, 44, divorced, seeks professional man for love, friendship, and to share interests in music, travel, politics. London area. Box 8009.

WOMAN ARTIST (fed up after Scottish winter), late forties, jazz-lover, smoker, interested in letters (initially) from decent, intelligent male. Photograph if possible. Central Scotland. Box 8122.

YORKSHIRE PROFESSIONAL woman (50), tall, attractive, amiable personality, intuitive mind, warm, loving nature — seeks male counterpart, to share the beautiful, simple things of life, with honesty and humour. Box 8082.

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Printed by Benham & Co Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester CO3 3LH. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd at 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Second class postage paid at New York NY.

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